9 1946

Current reading

ALL MEN MUST BE FREE

THE WALL THAT IS MY SKIN. By MILTON J. GOELL. New York: Wendell Malliet and Company. 1945. 41 Pages. $1.50.

Reviewed by Minnie Lomax

"I thought the wall that is my skin,
Kept me from going out.
I did not think, I did not know
It kept mankind from coming in."

This verse from the title poem of "The Wall That Is My Skin" successfully keynotes the theme of the eighteen lyrics that make up this small volume by Milton Goell, a Caucasian with an urge to close the gap between white America's ideological affirmations and its daily practices.

The wall of prejudice which keeps men of color from full participation in American life is not an original topic, but poet Goell gives it a touch of universal significance by demonstrating that the wall also shuts out mankind from the life God had planned for all His creatures here on earth. The following lines from one of the poems explain this creed:

"Some there are who would be brothers
Who stretch their hands to meet me,
Who lift their smiling eyes to greet me.
The wall rebuffs them with the others."

With simplicity, narrative and dramatic skill the author reviews the Negro's unhappy lot from the time when he was brought here a slave to the days of World War II, when he fought again to save democracy. These poems say this is the Negro's native land; that he has made great contributions to its civilization; that he is here to stay and will not stop fighting until not only he himself is free, but until he has "the world fair for all".

That the fight is not simply one for more rights for the black man but for a better life for all mankind is a theory presently being advanced by the avant garde of Negro leaders today. Of course, this attitude is a far cry from the Stygian despair and pessimism found in the writings of Negro authors after World War I. Mr. Goell, a poet of religious sensibilities, finds it easy to affirm a faith in man and a belief in progress, as the following excerpt will show:

"But God is on the side of growth,
And growth is sure as fate".

Although the tone is optimistic throughout, there is no suggestion that this Utopian dream of an America without a color line will be realized easily. A determined and belligerent note in the opening verse is maintained until the last poem which describes with utmost intensity the mood of the Negro soldier just returned from World War II. The black veteran says,

"The war with gun is almost done
And I have a rendezvous with life.
But the fight for right is never done
And I have a rendezvous with strife. . . .
That man and man shall join hand and hand,
And fight for the word of God;
That all shall be children before the Lord,
That none shall trample the other".

Causes are notably more effectively championed in poetry than in prose since so much more can be said so much more heroically in less space. Here in 18 poems Mr. Goell has written an outline of history and a prophecy for the future. As a practicing attorney and a manager of realty holdings in New York City, he came to know the Negro community in a way that inspired him to fight for better housing and better health, recreation, and child care facilities. He is the author of six other books, some of which relate his experiences in his welfare activities.

WRITES POWERFUL FIRST NOVEL ON RACIAL INTOLERANCE

When Mark Harris, whose novel, "Trumpet to the World," was published on April 1, was asked by his publisher to fill out the usual biographical form for the authors' file, he answered, "I am afraid I am too young to merit more than a paragraph of autobiography." Probably the most important event in this young man's twenty-one years was the acceptance by Reynal and Hitchcock of the manuscript he sent that house from an army hospital at Camp Wheeler, Georgia. The manuscript had been preceded by a letter dated April 2, 1944, which read in part:

"Thirteen months ago I entered the Army—enthusiastically resolved that whatever I was called upon to do, I would do—unhesitatingly, uncomplainingly, to the best of my ability. I pictured the Army then as a powerful, benevolent instrument—a crusade, shoulder to shoulder, all colors, all creeds . . . Today I am completely disillusioned. . . .

"In January, 1944, in an Army barracks within earshot of a lot of very unpleasant talk, I began a book in which I attempted to show how segregation within the ranks was completely unnerving and disturbing to the thoughtful soldier. I tried to imagine myself a Negro soldier upon whom the burden of inequality within the ranks falls hardest. 'Trumpet to the World' is the story of a man born black in these United States and an enlightened white woman—the story of two Americans and their struggle for freedom in a land where freedom is a somewhat abused word. In part it was told me over poker hands and Coca-Cola . . . by the surly, resentful, laughing, courageous Negroes whom I knew, who told me what it is like to fight a two-front battle. May I send you the manuscript?"

The answer from the publishers was an unequivocal "yes" and the manuscript was delivered in June. "Trumpet to the World" is a first novel that, according to Alice Hackett, author of "Best Sellers of the Last Fifty Years," is as "controversial as 'Strange Fruit'—written with perception, deep feeling, excellent craftsmanship, and scenes of dramatic power."

A. Lincoln, Kentuckian

LINCOLN AND THE SOUTH. By J. G. Randall. Illustrated. 161 pp. Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press. $1.50.

By WILLIAM B. HAMILTON

THIS presentation of Lincoln as a Southerner who understood the South and would have shielded her from the harsh features of Congressional Reconstruction is composed of four lectures given at Louisiana State University. It is worth noting that the lectures are remarkable because they were delivered by J. G. Randall, an eminent authority on Lincoln, and not because they were delivered to a Southern audience: for the South has long since accepted the national view of Lincoln.

Professor Randall recently issued a major work, "Lincoln the President: Springfield to Gettysburg," which was reviewed in these pages on Nov. 18 last. Inevitably, the smaller book serves the major one, within its period. Serving partly as condensation, partly as a footnote, it cannot be given a critical reading without reference to the parent work. It is a cockboat following in the wake of a man-o'-war.

As a native of Kentucky, as a friend of Southerners, as a moderate on slavery, as the husband of a Southern woman (whose reputation Randall is at pains to rescue from Herndon) and as a Jeffersonian liberal, Lincoln was equipped for sympathy for the South. It was his moderation that secured the Republican nomination for him, and a combination of this quality with understanding of his native Kentucky (together with patience and adroitness) that enabled him to save the border areas for the Union. As Randall slyly says, not until after Appomattox did Kentucky retroactively and sentimentally join the Confederacy.

IT seems fairly clear from this discussion that Lincoln was exercising his talents to save the border either to strengthen the Union or to weaken the opposition. The question raised is: how much effort did he expend, in the crucial period, to try to prevent the war? Professor Randall aligns himself with those who think that the Civil War could have been prevented if there had been more statesmanship and less extremism, stupidity and intolerance. Was it possible to prevent it after Lincoln's election? Except for the border situation, however, Lincoln's activities in the secession crisis and the debatable Sumter tragedy are not within the compass of this book.

Yet Professor Randall makes it clear that Lincoln's "Design for Peace" was all that statesmanship could contrive. In December, 1863, he put forward a plan for reconstruction unmarred by desire for revenge or party advantage. He evidenced in his last days the most liberal views toward the Confederates. The author believes that Lincoln, at a conference with his generals in March, 1865, authorized the magnanimous terms which Grant offered to Lee, and Sherman, originally, to Johnston. The happy prospect arising from this attitude was wrecked by the Congressional Radicals.

It is the Radicals, alone of the characters in the sad drama, whom Randall condemns. His careful scholarship, his cautious fairness and his love of moderation (as a sort of Lincolnian theme) almost conspire to envelop the thundering high subjects of which he writes in a curious sort of universal twilight.

THE sound essay on The Emancipation Proclamation which is condensed in one of these lectures has outraged the sentimentalists who do not like historical facts. Lincoln favored caution in abolition, deference to the States, compensation to the slave-owner, and gradual emancipation over a generation. As a war measure he came around to the Proclamation, which freed no slaves in Union States, and left the actual emancipation to advances by military commanders. But Randall rather adequately goes on to state the higher truth that the Proclamation did become a moral force, stirring men's souls in this country and in England. The war took on new meaning and Lincoln began to be thought of as a divine instrument.

Lincoln—A Contemporary Cartoon.

Novelettes, Grade-A

GREAT AMERICAN SHORT NOVELS. Edited by William Phillips. 682 pp. New York: The Dial Press. $4.

By ISAAC ROSENFELD

THE novelette, as Mr. Phillips says in his introduction to this volume, has engaged the attention of some of Europe's greatest writers—Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, Flaubert, Mann. In this country, too, it has attracted fine writers; but, unfortunately, the short novel in the United States has been a difficult to record, much less to document, than the ascertainable, tangible facts. Lincoln was infinitely more greater than a generous statesman. There was that in him more solidly valuable to a people than a national myth. Possibly Professor Randall's ripe knowledge of will enable him to give expression to it in his future volumes this volume, has e

The present collection is therefore to be welcomed, both for its own excellence and for the hope it holds forth as a possible encouragement to the reading, writing and publishing of novelettes in this nation. Eight novelettes are included in this volume—Melville's "Benito Cereno," Henry James' "Washington Square," Stephen Crane's "Maggie," Gertrude Stein's "Melanctha," Edith Wharton's "False Dawn," F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby," Katherine Anne Porter's "Pale Horse, Pale Rider" and Glenway Wescott's "The Pilgrim Hawk." With the possible exception of "Maggie," which seems to me to be of little more than historical interest, these are good examples of the novelette.

The novelette is no set form. Each writer has his own way with it, and in the present collection it can be seen to range from the long short-story to the actual novel. But length is, at most, a subsidiary criterion for defining the novelette. A far better one is the kind and degree of involvement among the characters of the story, and the relation of this involvement to the theme—a criterion necessarily rather vague and varying from case to case.

Miss Stein's "Melanctha" is an excellent example of the novelette as so defined. The life of the Negress Melanctha is presented with reference to her needs in love and to the strangely self-destructive character of her demands on other people. (Very justly Mr. Phillips says of this story: "The character of Melanctha is a remarkable fusion of her personal and her social history * * * the first—perhaps the only—treatment of the Negro in American fiction without exaggerated pathos, or patronization, or justification.") Melanctha's development as a character, her relationship to her lover Jeff, her subsequent loss of friends and her death are beautifully adapted to the novelette form—or rather, the novelette is shaped to fit, without pinch or gap, the natural contours of the story.

Miss Stein's use of the paragraph as unit of communication, her recognition of the expressive value of a simple, repetitive, rhythmical and wandering sentence structure, and her balancing of suggestion and concealment, all foreshadowing her later writing ("Melanctha" was first published in 1909) give this work a self-sufficient character, neither long short-story nor short novel, but novelette, as a distinct form. At its best this form can be a means of presenting, with economical detail, all that an author has to say, freeing him of the obsessive biology of creation, the manufacture of layer upon layer of connective tissue that supports, and yet, in all but the most accomplished writers, obscures the clear growth of story in the full-length novel.

ISSUE TRAVEL BOOK

NEW YORK, N. Y. — Good news For Those That Travel — after four years absence, the Negro Motorist Green Book, the official guide to hotels, tourist homes, restaurants and other places where Negroes are welcomed without embarrassment, will soon be in circulation again. it is due off the press next month and will list some 3,500 places throughout the country, all the leading Negro newspapers, schools and colleges and will contain information about the new cars.

The Green Book is used by all the Automobile Clubs of the United States, the U. S. Travel Bureau and endorsed by the Idlewild Chamber of Commerce. It is used exclusively by the Esso Marketeers. In the above picture James A. "Billboard" Jackson, special representative for the Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey and Esso, is signing a contract for 5,000 copies of the 1946 edition with Victor H. Green, president of the firm publishing the book.

Current reading

THE SOUTH FROM TWO ANGLES

DEW ON JORDAN. By Harold Preece and Celia Kraft. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 1946. 221 Pages. $2.50
TIME'S LAUGHTER IN THEIR EARS. By Murrell Edmunds. New York: Bernard Ackerman, Inc. 1946. 220 Pages. $2.50.

Reviewed by Minnie Lomax

"Brother, I believe that me bein' called on in Jellico jail house to start the Sanctified Church of God is a sign that we're a-goin to see the kind of revival here in Tennessee that I seen back there in Los Angeles in 1906." So saith Brother Dee Tucker—just released from jail after serving time for drunkenness and making love to another man's wife—to Harold Preece and Celia Kraft who had just come to the "Country of the Word" in the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee to gather material on the little sects, scattered over the entire U.S., but more prevalent thereabouts. Brother Dee was speaking of Brother Seymour, one-eyed colored preacher, whom he held to be the daddy of most of the Holiness churches, to whose mission on Azusa street saints and sinners, black and white, flocked to greet one another with warmhearted hugs and the passionate holy kiss, as it still is the custom to do in Paducah, Ky., today. It was always Brother Dee's testy lament that right after Brother Seymour's revival "they all started splittin' up into diff'rent dee-nominations" like the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church of God of the Americas, the Last Days Church of God, to name only a few.

These innumerable Holiness and Pentecostal sects are quicker on the Bible than on the trigger, and know more about the Siege of Jericho than of the Siege of Stalingrad, and are more familiar with the names of Generals Joshua, Saul, and David, than with those of Eisenhower, Hap Arnold and Patton. "Dew on Jordan" is their story. To the authors, these religious schisms of the Bible taken literally are more concerned with settling the problem of whether music should be played in church or not, or of taking communion from one cup or many cups than they are with world peace; and they represent not merely a break with the established Churches but a social movement of a people experiencing acute social maladjustments to capture a sense of security through religion. And though they may be barred from becoming judges or senators, they can annex a feeling of importance and the comforts of recognition through their own maverick churches as Elders, Deacons, Stewards, Apostles, or "Storm Troopers of the Conquering Church". In the Sanctified Church of God "every man stands equal with every other man before God".

Harold Preece and his wife roamed the broad provinces of the "Country of the Word" watching the revolting antics of the snake cults, the sadistic methods of the Faith Healers on Blackberry Mountain, the "Baptizin" in the Wildcat River in Indiana, the foot washing of the Duck Baptists; they listened to the preaching of the Word in many log-cabin churches; they met with well-meaning people like Brother Myers who peered through his telescope daily at the clouds for a sign of the Lord's coming, and with petty religious charlatans like Dee Tucker who robbed their followers, cohabited with the church sisters and sometimes peddled hate. The material which the authors collected is presented in narratives told by the people themselves in the poor-white idiom, which makes for interest, comedy, pathos, and tragedy.

After reading "Dew on Jordan" one wonders if in these lowly and illiterate groups is the seed from which will eventually spawn the real democracy which the intelligent and highborn haven't been able to come through with. Although orthodox-minded to the point of emotional fanaticism and resistant to liberal trends, these folks of the Holiness groups have been able in the heart of the South to bring blacks and whites together for worship. When Claude Williams of the People's Institute of Applied Religion can get black and white talking to each other in Arkansas and Owen Whitfield, Negro preacher in southern Missouri, can get black and white to pray together, it may not be so difficult to transmute this evangelistic enthusiasm into social good.

* * * * *

"Time's Laughter in Their Ears" by Murrell Edmunds explores the dramatic possibilities of a situation, not original, in which a northern-educated Negro returns to his home in the South and attempts to ameliorate the deplorable conditions in which he finds his people. The setting is a small town in Louisiana, subtly ruled by Tom Cutler, feudal landowner and representative in Congress. Friend and backer of Cutler's reactionary policies is Bert Barnes, Ph.D., and member of the faculty of Lambeth college of which Cutler is trustee and lavish patron.

Charlie, the college-trained Negro, works in a local factory making overalls for the government. As the sole support of an old mother and three sisters and brothers, he is exempt from the draft. Supporting Charlie in his efforts to secure better wages and working hours for the Negroes employed by Cutler is Bob Henry Barnes, brother of teacher Barnes and his antithesis in disposition and philosophy.

All the cliches and melodramatic tricks which authors of novels on the race problem employ are found here. The reader is served clandestine meetings, masked mobs, and the inevitable lynching. The story is told through the eyes of a 12-year-old boy, son of the college professor. It is young Bobby, who after witnessing the lynching of Charlie, gives utterance to the author's theory when he exclaims, "They are killing Uncle Bob Henry"—not actually killing him—but "something inside of him, that was inside of Charlie, too, something that was neither black nor white, that made Charlie and Uncle Bob Henry brothers".

Sketchy treatment and preoccupation with propaganda keep this novel from coming alive or evoking the desired emotional response.

GI's and Authors Meet at Harlem Center

As Ellen Tarry, left, and Marie Hall Ets, right, point out familiar scenes, soldiers and sailors at the Harlem Defense Recreation Center enjoy a trip around Harlem with the hero of "My Dog Rinty," recently published juvenile book which was written by Miss Tarry and Mrs. Ets. The boys feel a special interest in the book because Miss Tarry is a staff member and Mrs. Ets a frequent visitor at the Center.

Hats On

PM New York, N. Y.

To the Editor:

No hats off for PM's amazing display of shortsightedness in allowing Eddie Condon's "review" of Mezzrow's *Really the Blues* to appear in its book section. What, for example, is a "watermellon accent"? What is a "Gellis dialect"? What, furthermore, are some of the other cleverly disguised allusions to the book's and Mezz Mezzrow's racial background?

Sun. New York 11-10-46 JIMMY ERNST

'Dew on Jordan' Puts Light on Deep South

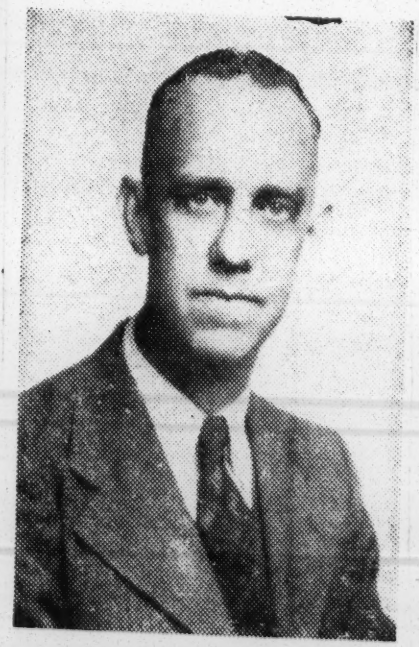
DEW ON JORDAN, by Harold Preece and Celia Kraft. Dutton, $2.50.

Reviewed by
MYRA PAGE

Dew on Jordan has a rare folk quality which stems from the character of the two who wrote it. Harold Preece and his wife Celia are—as we put it in the South—"folks"; born and bred in the briar patch and daisy fields of southern culture they write in human living terms about the people and region from which they spring.

Part of their inheritance is the folk gift of knowing how to relish and build up a story with earthy humor, characters and talk that came alive, and homely imagery that make the pages turn fast. Once met, you'll no forget Uncle Billy and his seeds good and evil, nor the authors' Uncle Matt, his scantified wife and the long-awaited Ascension on Rainey St. that failed to come off. Yet the underlying theme is a serious one, product of many years of research and field work.

Dew on Jordan marks the first serious attempt to study a pattern of American folk life, tenacious and deeply emotional that up to now has been flippantly treated, caricatured by writers of so-called humorous stories in slick magazines, or by journalists bent on sensational racy tales for their paper on some little backwoods' religious sect of snake worshippers or Holy Rollers.



HAROLD PREECE

In the South a poor man was barred by the tax on voting from becoming a judge or senator. But he could be elected chief steward of the local Congregational Methodist Church or moderator of his district association of Duck River Baptists. A poor boy with talent couldn't go to college and become a lawyer or business man. But he could exercise his bent for leadership when the "Lord give him the call to preach" in one of the little sects . . . the one place where he might speak his mind, where every man stood equal with every other.

CELIA KRAFT

The one thing I missed in the book was more of the authors' interpretative analysis, but I suspect the editor's blue pencil accounts for this.

The book describes both types of sect leaders, genuine kindly though self-deluded people like Uncle Billy, and spellbinding fakers like the Thirteenth Apostle who charmed Uncle Matt's wife, Florabelle, and her friends into selling all they had in their homes to prepare for the Lord's coming—then made off with their offerings and the town's prettiest girl.

The authors tell us "the world is catching up with the unwordly and other wordly, dividing them on the same issues which move and divide us all." Some few sects have fallen under the evil shadow of the Crooked Cross, more have moved naturally toward labor's side, a few like Brother Cessna of Detroit and sects in Paducah, Kentucky

This is a furious novel written with great restraint. It is a witty novel so quiet and oblique that dull people will find it dull. It is a patriotic novel which will call subversive. It is learns that there are a patriotic novel two kinds of with casual sex relations that of his well-ordered prudes will call it obscene. And it is that extreme rarity, a thoughtful novel in an age gaudy, historical romances.

Despite Uncle Harry's cynical remarks about the profession of medicine, both he and his nephew agree that it is a better career for David than law, since (they believe) it is practically impossible

All for Best' Examines Our Prejudices

ALL FOR THE BEST. By Bentz Plagemann. Simon and Schuster. 226 pp. $2.50.

enlisted man—worthy fellows no doubt, but scarcely fit companions for a gold-braided young Navy officer).

The wartime double standard keeps the venereal wards filled with fine young fellows, some of them so crippled with g. c. arthritis they cannot leave their beds. Boys it seems will be boys.

Other primitive expressions of a savage planet bring David home minus one leg and on the verge of suicide.

The happy ending is about as convincing as was Voltaire's, that is, if you like hoeing in the garden or marrying a girl like Mary Jane.

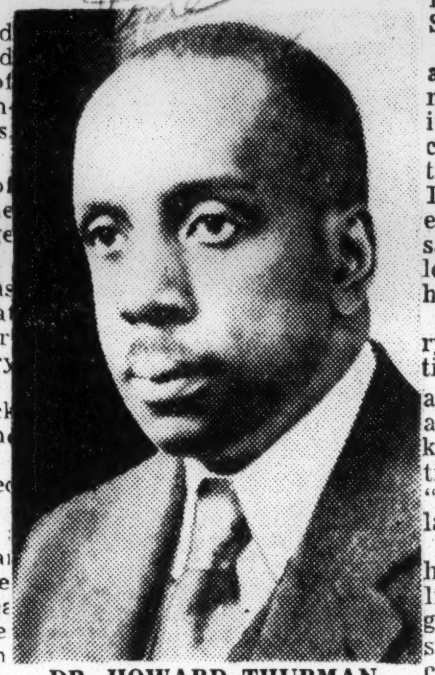
Don't read this one if you lack the moral courage to examine your own prejudices. —S. N.

W. G. Rogers, of the Associated Press, says:

"Candide" was something of a model for this venture, and I can only wish the copy were closer to the original. It's a grand idea but doesn't develop into a novel. Plagemann is not Voltaire, and this is a biting satire that doesn't bite.

BENTZ PLAGEMANN
The Idea Was Grand.

One of 12



DR. HOWARD THURMAN, one of twelve collaborating authors of the new book, "Together," which was released recently by Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. Dr. Thurman, who is dean of Andrew Rankin Chapel and professor at Howard University School of Religion, is now on leave to serve as co-pastor of Fellowship Church of All Peoples in San Francisco, an interdenominational and interracial church.

Margaret Halsey writes book on the Negro

NEW YORK—"Color Blind: A White Woman Looks at the Negro", is to be published Sept. 20 by Simon and Schuster. Its author is Margaret Halsey, known for her "With Malice Toward Some" and "Some of My Best Friends Are Soldiers". The latter satirized Army segregation.

Better Boy Scout

Jerry Marshall talked like one of the better Boy Scouts. In fact he was one of the better Boy Scouts.

"The stranger then fainted dead away" (so the book says). "Jerry's Boy Scout training served him in good stead. He remained as cool as possible, while examining the legs and arms for fractures. The man's face was ashen and his eyes bloodshot" (so the book says). "Carefully, the boy (Jerry) loaded the prostrate form across his shoulders."

But something happened to Jerry along about the chapter entitled "Jerry Swears Revenge," and he gets into the policy game, and in a chapter entitled "Blitzkrieg" (or maybe it's the one entitled "The Heat Is On") he gets "enmeshed in the coils of the law."

Just before he creaks off to jail, he grows very emotional and delivers himself of the following gem: "Let's hope, then . . ." (he said, doubtless struggling to conceal the tumult raging within him) "that your degree will feed and clothe these people who are now out of work . . . You've told the white man everything about the one phase of Negro life that was still puzzling him . . ." (Of course his sister Helen should not have written that paper on the policy racket. Jerry was bitter about the whole thing.)

"You, my own sister, fell for that law-and-order bunk. You're simply a victim of white psychology. My God! How much longer will the Negro suffer like this before he cracks?"

Disconsolate Helen

Sister Helen, who was a June baby, did not talk like one. "I wish to suggest (she said on page 98) that the time is most appropriate for the law-enforcing agencies of the City of Chicago to take full cognizance of this petty racket which is slowly strangling the economic life of the dependent groups."

Poor, poor disconsolate Helen! It was her indictment that sent Brother Jerry to jail.

Lewis A. H. Caldwell wrote "The Policy King" all by himself (and probably put out money to have it published—a thing which no writer should ever do) and used to be, so it says on the back of the book, a newsboy, grocery clerk, houseman, candymaker, stockyard laborer, social worker, etc. He should decide on one of these occupations and quietly stick to it.

[The Policy King. L. A. H. Caldwell. New Vistas, Chicago. 303 P. $3.00.]

Author

Mme. Willetta Torres of Detroit, Michigan, whose new text book on beauty culture has just been released by the publishers.

Noted Operator and Teacher In Beauty Culture Announces That Her Publication Is Ready

Detroit, Mich. (Special)—A new complete textbook on beauty culture, said to be one of the best ever issued by a member of the race, has just come from the press. The title of the book is "Beauty Culture Course Of Study." It has 156 pages including the cover. It is printed on enamel paper and is brimful of sketches, drawings and illustrations. The book is written for the sole purpose of being used as a text book and study course for the thousands of beauty culture operators and schools throughout the United States. The author is well versed in this particular line of work. She was a former Newark, N. J. teacher of beauty culture at the Simplex Beauty College. She was also formerly with the Y. W. C. A. Trade Schools of New York City.

Mme. Torres is a graduate of the Mason De Beauty French System, and also of the Marenello School. She holds certificates to practice her profession, issued by the state board of Illinois, Michigan, Arkansas and Nebraska. While in New York City Mme. Torres was much in demand because she was considered as authority. In her book she has fifteen illustrations, such as the muscles of the head and face, nerves, veins, arteries, glands, differences in hair forms, the skin and its appendages, cross sections of the different kinds of hair. She shows up the oil glands, fat cells, she pictures the muscles of the front and back forearm, illustrations of the nail and massage.

In this same book she says in her preface: "At the present time when competition in the business world is so great and the woman over thirty finds herself discriminated against, it is absolutely necessary that she use all available means to keep herself looking as fit and attractive and as young as possible. "General good health is the primary consideration—'radiating' health means much in one's experience, and the old saying, 'cleanliness is next to Godliness' still holds good—Cleanliness of body, hair, nails. Some few women are favored with naturally beautiful hair and skin and color. But most women find that after 20 they need to aid nature—and the beautician can do much to eliminate the average tell-tale marks of age. Constant vigilance and care will do much to keep a woman looking young and that means much to her social and business success."

There is a list of contents in the publication. It will be offered, not only to the beauty colleges, beauticians and operators, but can be used by students who are taking special courses, because in reality it is a Text Book as well as a Study Course. Mme Torres resides at 274 Watson St. Apt. 16, here in Detroit. It is understood that this Text Book will be sold for $2.00, because the price is not based upon the size, but the actual importance of it as a Text Book, a Study Course and Guide.

THE "INSIDE STORY" OF JAZZ

(Woody Herman and The Author)

JAZZ CAVALCADE

BY DAVE DEXTER, JR.

with foreword by ORSON WELLES

Dave Dexter's exciting, fast-moving story of Jazz takes you from Storyville of old New Orleans to Carnegie Hall. From Pine Top to Be-pop, there are new and interesting facts about the men who make Jazz.

Every reader will "eat up" the pages of this thrilling inside tale of musicians, singers and all those who are responsible for our modern American music.

Dexter is a former saxophonist who worked as a reporter in Kansas City during the Pendergast era. He edited Down Beat, the musician's bible, for four years. After living Jazz for the past fifteen years he decided to put it on paper. This is it . . . the inside story with no punches pulled. Illustrated

$3.00 at your bookstore

A CRITERION BOOK • Criterion Music Corp. • RKO Bldg., N.Y.C.

A Second Look

by J. Saunders Redding

The Rev. Richard Marshall talked like this: "Get out of this house and never let me lay eyes on you again! You're worse than the family's black sheep; you're a disgrace to humanity." Fortunately, he died in the second chapter.

Ma Marshall talked like this: "Children, we are alone now, and each of us needs the other. What's happened in the past is water over the dam. Let's talk this whole thing over carefully. Don't think of blaming anybody.

"Now that Pa's gone, Jerry, I can tell you and Helen without breaking my word to him. Joe's been doing his part by us, even if we did put him out." Ma lives on to the end of the book—Chapter XXVI, page 303—but fortunately she doesn't talk much.

Joe Marshall, the elder son, talked like this: "Ah usta run wid a gang . . ." (He doesn't sound a thing like Ma and Pa.) "Ah quit 'em 'cause dey wuzn't nuttin' but smal' tim' thieves. Ah wants to work mah way up in a gud bus'ness 'n ah wants to git wid yu. When mah old man put me out Wednesday night ah made up mah mind fur gud, 'n here ah is." Joe gets killed by Yaller Sam along about Chapter XII.

9 1946

Brothers' Novel

The Courier-Journal

About 'Vodun'

Louisville, Ky.

A Review by Blyden Jackson

Sun, 11-24-46

In Haiti

THE BEAST OF THE HAITIAN HILLS: By Philippe Thoby-Marcelin and Pierre Marcelin. 210 pp. Rinehart & Co. $2.50.

This is a novel about Haiti and the power of "vodun." As such it could easily have been another cheap venture into sensationalism, and nothing more. Its authors, the Marcelin brothers—who, a few seasons ago, won the Latin American Prize Novel Competition with their "Canape-Vert"—have taken material that is raw, in more senses than one, and given it, if not profoundly, at least clearly, a significance beyond gaudy entertainment.

Not that "The Beasts of the Haitian Hills" is a tame performance. Not at all. Nor that the Marcelins etherealize the crude paganism which the impoverished Haitian peasants have retained as one of the discernibly African elements in their cultural pattern. Indeed there is enough of Faulkner and Poe here in witch-doctor form to content almost any addict of weird fables.

Whenever one reads now strange tales of other lands he is prone to certain misgivings. By this time, it seems, we have learned rather well the lesson of those medieval travelogues like Bartholomew's "On the Properties of Things" in which the wonders grew in direct proportion with their remoteness. It happens that there was available to me for consultation about this book a young Haitian student whose judgment I have learned to respect, and whose home, moreover, is luckily in Petionville, the very city which Morin Dutilleul, the novel's central figure, quits to become a planter in the surrounding back country. Our student says that the Marcelins' Haiti is real and that their "vodun" is the genuine article, not a calculated lure for the tourist trade. When she says "Yes, these are the peasants I know," she also adds, not so much defensively, as pleadingly, "But they are weak. They work very hard and they do not get enough to eat. It is this which makes them easy for the houngans [the 'vodun' priests]."

The Marcelins apparently also have discovered that it is the weak whom the irrational world captures. Dutilleul is a successful grocer, but a pathetic human being, before he strikes into the peasants' kingdom. The Marcelins are not merely interested in the display value of superstition. They are, as it were, abnormal psychologists, using in both the cases of Dutilleul and the peasants arresting clinical material for furthering a synthesis of our knowledge about this thing called hallucination. In the end, "vodun" literally destroys Dutilleul, the supposed sophisticate. But the Marcelins put the emphasis of their explanation not on some mysterious power in the blood, some past reclaiming its own, but rather on the grocer's cankered mind. So, by putting together Dutilleul and the peasants (whose less than decent living conditions they are well aware of), and interpreting the effects of "vodun" as psychiatrists rather than press agents, the Marcelins have presented a social document worth examination.

Book Reviews

The Afro-American

by J. Saunders Redding

Baltimore, Md.

THIRD WARD NEWARK, by Curtis Lucas. Ziff-Davis, Publishers, 238 pp., $2.50. Sat. 1-4-47

"Third Ward Newark" is a story which concerns the cousins Hattie and Wonnie Brown. They are comely yellow girls who live precariously near the bottom of the lower class in New Jersey's biggest city. Hattie was seventeen and Wonnie five years younger when Aunt Sarah died.

Aunt Sarah, who had worked in white folks' kitchens, had done her level best on $12 a week. She had kept the girls in school, staved off the pangs of hunger, and tried to teach them the right way to go.

But after Aunt Sarah's death, the right way was pretty steep, and Hattie, who loved her younger cousin, just couldn't make it. She had just graduated from high school, but the only job she could get was in a nickel-nursing cracker's kitchen at $8 a week.

Hattie Gets Caught

Eight dollars wasn't enough. Hattie couldn't see poor Wonnie suffer, so she took the easiest way. She went to bed with men for money. And one night she was caught.

Wonnie was put in the home of a woman who kept children for the State. It was not bad there, because Wonnie could go to school, and in the home were other girls to play with. One of these was Mildred—a big girl for sixteen—and wise and predatory.

Mildred stole some money from the woman in the home and, taking Wonnie with her, ran away. For a time it was all right, for Mildred knew how to do. She knew a dozen city-jungle tricks.

Killed by Man

But one night two white men, posing as the law, picked them up and tried to rape them and, maddened by an obstinacy they could not understand in colored girls, killed Mildred. They threw her body into the Passaic River. It nearly drove Wonnie insane, and it did give her a psyche trauma which made her hate white men.

But before she could get out of the hospital to do anything rash, Otis Evans, the colored lawyer-politician, comes into the picture bringing with him Hattie Brown, who is now out of prison. Between them they get Wonnie kind of straight.

They send her off to Washington to school, where she is finally graduated. But when Wonnie returns to Newark she hates white men as much as ever; and especially the white man in the Gin Mill, Ernie Mihie—the man who had killed Mildred. Wonnie is all mixed up, but one night she meets Joe Anderson, a boy from Georgia. The next night they are engaged, and shortly after that they marry.

afro-American Sat

Promise Shown

I will not tell you how the whole thing ends. 1-4-47

Curtis Lucas, the author, tries to do too much. He gets his story all loused up with a sermon he doesn't quite know how to preach. In the first eight, swift chapters, when he sticks to cold, detached, almost telegraphic narration of his story, he shows fine promise.

Then after that the promise peters out, he loses punch, his characters go blurry. But this is a first novel by the author, and on the strength of it, Curtis Lucas will bear watching. Baltimore md.

Books of the Times

The Times New York, N.Y. Wed. 11-27-46

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

OF THE making of books about the Civil War there is no end. Although we have just emerged from the greatest and most fateful war of history it is unlikely that it will ever play a role in American thought and emotion and literature comparable to that of the War Between the States. In spite of all the bungling, all the petty self-seeking and all the horrors of civil war there was a special variety of gallantry and heroism then that the world has not seen since. Then the beau geste was still admired, concepts of chivalry and "civilized warfare" were still sufficiently honored so that men were surprised and enraged when they were not, and both sides fought for their idea of freedom. The wounds inflicted upon the body of our nation were deep; the scars still show. Nevertheless, more than the Revolution or the conquest of the West, it was our heroic age. Still another history of that war is published today, "Experiment in Rebellion,"* by Clifford Dowdey.

Clifford Dowdey

A scholarly, thoroughly readable and defiantly opinionated book it is, too. It is neither a military history, although the guns sound on nearly every page, nor a political history, although politics play a major part. It is a narrative of the Confederacy as an "experiment in rebellion," which tries to provide in one manageable volume a survey of the war from the Southern point of view and to omit no important aspect of the Confederacy's "experiment": battles, politics, foreign affairs, social and economic factors, personalities. The spotlight is upon Richmond and the chief actor is Jefferson Davis; but the important supporting roles are numerous, the background swarms with bit players.

A Loyal Son of Richmond

Mr. Dowdey, hitherto known for his superior historical novels about Virginia in both Colonial and Civil War times, is a loyal son of Richmond, steeped in the lore of his native place. He is also an industrious investigator among historical sources. Although intelligently sympathetic to the Southern cause, he is not bemused by romantic ancestor worship and eyes many a tinsel hero with an irreverent and ironic stare. His cluttered, swarming pages are filled with as many examples of vanity, hurt feelings, false pride and inefficiency as they are with heroism and self-sacrifice.

Rarely has a historian crowded so much drama, color, gossip, "human interest" and picturesque detail into one book as Mr. Dowdey has crammed into "Experiment in Rebellion." The woods may be so obscured by the trees that disorder and confusion reign; but the trees are vividly drawn, enormously interesting. Sometimes, to keep them interesting, Mr. Dowdey allows his racy, informal style to lapse into cheap colloquialisms. When he calls the Confederate Vice President, Alexander Stephens, "an emaciated pedant" Mr. Dowdey hits the bull's eye with a neat phrase. But when he calls the Confederate Secretary of State, Judah Benjamin, "the Harry Hopkins of his day, the Du Barry of the court in Richmond" he spoils his own effects by sheer extravagance. He is outspoken in his name-calling, too, particularly of Northern generals. "Fremont the fake and Banks the buffoon" get off easily compared with the "cold-blooded viciousness" of Custer and Sheridan.

So vast is Mr. Dowdey's canvas it is impossible in a short space to indicate the variety and fascination of the material he has included: Davis' Cabinet and the character and careers of all its members; Davis' family life; social life in Richmond and low life in Richmond, where there were forty "well-known" gambling establishments; obscure heroes such as Henry Hotze, who proved himself a master Confederate propagandist in England, and Timothy Webster, the Pinkerton detective who, until he was hanged, was the most effective Union spy in Richmond; finances (once there was only $10 in the Confederate treasury); the astonishing prevalence of Union sentiment throughout the South; blockade runners, black markets, cotton, railroads and the folly of a draft system which exempted owners of twenty or more slaves and so inspired the subversive slogan, "A rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

Davis Sharply Portrayed

These and a score of other matters insure that "Experiment in Rebellion" is amusing as well as educational reading. But it may well be that Mr. Dowdey's portrait of Jefferson Davis will arouse the most interest and even some controversy. Born in the backwoods of Kentucky, Davis was a "frontier neo-aristocrat." His successful elder brother made it possible for Davis to live the life of an aristocratic planter. He did so with such enthusiasm he became a fanatical champion of caste, "a highly keyed gentleman of pure intellect." Davis did not understand human emotions and would not condescend to tact. He argued logically, furiously resented any disagreement and scorned all advice. Blind in one eye, racked by neuralgia, obsessed by a "need to play soldier" which spread confusion in the Southern armies, Davis acted as if he were the head of a powerful state instead of the leader of a rebellion in desperate need of personal loyalties. As Confederate fortunes sank, Davis made a "psychotic retreat into his own private world" until the entire Confederate government was just "one deluded man."

Doubtless qualified specialists will challenge this interpretation of Jefferson Davis' character. Whether they do or not will be immaterial to Mr. Dowdey's readers, who should find much pleasure and profit in the sprightly pages of "Experiment in Rebellion."

*EXPERIMENT IN REBELLION. By Clifford Dowdey. 455 pages. Doubleday. $3.75.

Second Thoughts

S. I. Hayakawa

Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 12-28-46

Swing Is Uncle Tom Music?

IT WOULD PAY every thoughtful student of American Negro culture to read slowly and reflectively every page of Rudi Blesh's magnificent new book, "Shining Trumpets" (Alfred A. Knopf; $5). The book bristles with original ideas and evaluations, and these are supported by that vast, encyclopedic command of names, dates, record labels, composers, and arrangements that marks the true hot jazz enthusiast. Blesh is really in there. And his opinions have that double quality of being both keenly penetrating and hotly debatable that guarantees thoughtful reading.

One of the things that saddens him, for example, is swing—but he has the most interesting statement of the reasons for his objections that I have ever read:

"Jazz is the symbol of a struggle and a hope; swing music is that of defeat. The Negro's success in America is not to be measured by the chimera of popular acclaim nor to be counted in the dollars that will not buy equality. Swing music . . . is an abandonment of the truly Negroid elements in jazz in favor of white elements more intelligible and acceptable to white society. Thus swing, outwardly the symbol of triumph, is inwardly that of the failure of Emancipation."

Debt to Africa

IN SHORT, Blesh finds that Jelly Roll Morton, Baby Dodds, King Oliver, Jimmy Yancey, Albert Ammons, Kid Ory, and all who play in the great blues and hot tradition stand for the best that is in Negro music. Such performers, however, as Teddy Wilson, Coleman Hawkins, Lionel Hampton, Duke Ellington, and John Kirby, he feels, have consciously or unconsciously sold out the Negro.

(Talking about Kid Ory, by the way, there are two magnificent, exceptionally high-fidelity records of his band recently published under the Exner label: No. 3, "Dippermouth Blues" and "Savoy Blues"; No. 4, "Balling the Jack" and "High Society." These feature, in addition to Ory's trombone, Mutt Carey's cornet, both strictly out of New Orleans, the brilliant clarinet work of Joe Darensbourg of Seattle. It is interesting that the best records these days are being published almost entirely on little-known labels, backed by persons of taste and enthusiasm who are more interested in art than in profits.)

Rudi Blesh has gone farther than any one else into the examination of the African sources of jazz. From both the external evidence of social history and the internal evidence of the music itself, he shows that the basic creative elements in jazz are almost entirely derived from African traditions. He examines, therefore, not only the recorded African music gathered by anthropologists, but the religious music (preaching with rhythmic responses from the congregation), ring shouts, spirituals, the play songs of Negro children "Little girl, little girl, did you go downtown? Yes, mam. Did you see my brown? Yes, mam."), the work songs of the various occupations (water songs, hammer songs, axe songs), the chanted cries of Negro street-vendors ("Black beans, pretty black beans")—all before he gets down to the problem of the blues.

I do not believe that, with this evidence before us, it can ever be claimed again that jazz does not distill the entire folk experience of Negroes right back through slavery days and in Africa.

Shining Trumpet

BLESH'S BOOK is serious—too serious for hasty or careless reading. With a scholar's thoroughness he has published notations of almost all the important passages he discusses, and he gives lists of records which can be referred to if you want to weigh his evaluations.

Like any other man with a burning cause, he makes his evaluations sharp and dogmatic. Much of what passes in commercial circles for jazz today, with its "screaming brass and bleating reed riffs," he dismisses as not only anti-jazz, but anti-music: "There is hardly a canon of art or common good taste which it does not violate." And if he is tough on musicians, he is even tougher on critics, commercial or highbrow.

I believe that "Shining Trumpets" is a landmark in the critical history of jazz. Posterity may support or contest his views, but it will not ignore them. As for myself, being a moldy fig with a yard-long beard, I agree with Blesh almost all the way. I wish people like Charles Edgar and Erskine Tate and others in Chicago who know the story of jazz from personal experience would read his book and tell me what they think of it.

Fight Prejudice With Books

By ELIZABETH M. BACON

The Workers New York

THERE are very few books avou Negro children for the youngest age group (from 5 to 8 years). It is in this age group, too, that there are some of the most offensive picture books, illustrated with libelous caricatures, or stories in which the Negro children are made fun of behind a screen of being "cute." Sun 7-7-46

I personally, do not feel that stories about animals which point a moral lesson that discrimination is bad, (such as SPOTTY by Margaret Rey) are particularly desirable. After all, discrimination is a human problem and needs to be attacked in human terms. A book which gives an understanding, sympathetic picture of Negro children contributes a lot more in this respect than a book which presents the problem abstractly in terms of rabbits. There's certainly no harm in **Spotty** and similar books, but I am not sure that there's any great good either.

Here are a few good books for younger children.

TWO IS A TEAM by Lorraine and Jerrold Beim. Illustrated by Ernest Chrichlow. Harcourt. $1.75.

This picture book tells the story of two little boys and their wagon, and is built around the idea that cooperation will get you further than quarreling. One little boy is Negro and the other white; this fact is never mentioned in the text but shows only in the very beautiful pictures. The important thing about the book is the natural way the two children accept each other on their own merits.

TOBE by Stella Gentry Sharpe. Illustrated with photographs. University of North Carolina Press. $1.50.

Also a handsome picture book, this one tells what Tobe and his brothers and sisters do on their North Carolina Farm throughout the year. The text is simple and well written, describing the details of daily life that are so fascinating to younger children. Here again, the fact that Tobe is a Negro boy is never mentioned; it is evident from the really magnificent photographs. Sun 7-7-46

MY DOG RINTY by Ellen Tarry. Illustrated with photographs. Viking Press. $1.50.

What TOBE does for a country family, **My Dog Rinty** does for a city family. This story about a dog that gets its young master into a lot of hot water is universal in its appeal. The pictures are pleasant, homey, and familiar.

Fight Prejudice with Books

The Worker

By ELIZABETH M. BACON

(This is Article V of a series.)

New York, N.Y.

Sun. 7-28-46

AS I SAID at the beginning of this series on books to help combat Negro discrimination, the list of books I have given is far from complete. It is a starter, however, and I will mention more books on the subject from time to time. Fortunately, more are now being published, although their numbers still fall far below the need. If you do not find these books in your local public or school library, you should make a special point of asking for them.

Of course, not all boys and girls in any one age group will enjoy all the books recommended for their particular group. A youngster with a passion for sports may get an understanding of discrimination from John Tunis's **All-American**, whereas he will reject the direct approach of **The Races of Mankind** as "dull stuff."

This much, however, I can say about all the books on the list: Not one of them is didactic or "preachy" in the way children so resent; and in my experience some children have liked all of them.

I should like to add a word here about the far-too-many children's books which present a distorted picture of the Negro people and serve only to encourage and re-enforce prejudices. Some of them win widespread approval by masquerading as "literature" and "looking at all sides of the question." It would take too much space even to begin to list these books here. However, there are certain standards by which they can be judged.

1. Are the Negro characters always presented in a servile relationship? (As they are so conspicuously in **Summer At Buckhorn** by Anna Rose Wright.)

2. Does the books use dialect, presenting the Negro characters speaking some quaint kind of language while the white characters speak perfect English?

3. Are the illustrations caricatures? (**The Animated Little Black Sambo** is especially offensive in this respect.) 7-28-46

4. Does the text make fun of Negro characters as being stupid, undignified, or otherwise inferior? (On this point as well as on the language point above, the **Nicodemus** books are bad.)

If your child comes in contact with such books—as he unfortunately probably will, because our school and public libraries are full of them—you should point out to him, as soon as a natural opportunity arises, just why these books are untruthful and wrong. And you should certainly lodge a protest with the library.

Fight Prejudice With Books

The Worker

By ELIZABETH M. BACON

(This is article IV of a series)

7-21-46

HERE are several more good books dealing with Negro discrimination for the oldest age group (12 years of age and up).

The Races of Mankind, by Ruth Benedict and Gene Weltfish. Illustrated by Ad Reinhardt. Public Affairs Committee. Ten cents.

While this pamphlet by two prominent anthropologists was originally written for the Army, the simple straightforward text and the large number of humorous illustrations make it good reading for young people in high school. It presents the basic facts about race and answers a lot of the most common questions, such as: Are white people more intelligent than Negroes? Is there really such a thing as "Negro blood"? Are certain so-called "racial characteristics" innate or the result of environment? 7-21-46

All-American, by John Tunis. Illustrated. Harcourt. $2.

Although it was published less than five years ago, this football story has already assumed the stature of a classic. Brilliantly written, breathlessly exciting, it tells how a white high school boy in a New England city overcame race prejudice in himself and leads a fight against it in the town. The book ruthlessly exposes the vested interests who foment prejudice among the young people, handles the question of red-baiting excellently, and relates the whole problem of discrimination to the question of sportsmanship. Moreover, the book has one of the most exciting descriptions of a football game that I have ever read. 7-21-46

Shuttered Windows, by Florence Crannell Means. Illustrated by Erick Berry. Houghton Mifflin. $2.

What happens when a Negro high school girl goes from the comparative freedom and economic security of a middle-class home in Minneapolis to join her grandmother in a shack on an island off the Georgia coast. This story for high school girls tries to show the reader what it **feels** like in terms of the details of daily living to be a Negro in a white-dominated world. How the heroine finds new pride in her background (her great-grandfather led a slave revolt) and determines to spend her life fighting for her people forms the basis of the book. This is the most forthright book on the subject that I know of.

Bookshelf

By

GERTRUDE MARTIN

Defender

People in Glass Houses

AS DR. DOROTHY BARUCH points out in her new book, "Glass House of Prejudice," most of us do live in glass houses as far as prejudices are concerned. "The disease of hate is a disease to which people have not yet become immune," the author states. This is true of large numbers of the majority group and of lesser numbers of the minorities who often feel deep feelings of resentment.

"Glass House of Prejudice" is divided into three sections: Effects of Prejudice, Causes of Prejudice, and Cures for Prejudice. Dr. Baruch who is a psychologist traces the root of hatred back in many cases to basic insecurities and hostility—often toward members of the family which are taken out on scapegoats. Chicago, Ill

"Most frequently, prejudice goes back to hatred that has been engendered by frustration and defeat, and this presents a difficult problem. If we accept hostility as the most important basis of prejudice, we will need to deal with hostility in ourselves and in others to bring about a cure," she writes. Sat. 12-28-46

Members of minority groups in this country are subjected to numerous discriminations which prevent them, too, from having the security which is necessary for normal development. "A person cannot feel worthwhile when he is shoved into segregated schools, put into the shabbiest buildings, given the worst equipment and the poorest teachers," the author declares.

Hatred Falls on Willing Ears

DR. BARUCH emphasizes the fact that Hitlers, Klansmen and other hate purveyors can only attain power because seeds of hate fall on willing ears. She also makes it clear that prejudices will not be overcome unless there can be economic as well as emotional security for members of the majority group.

Dr. Baruch has presented her material clearly and briefly and with numerous examples from her own experiences. Although there is little that is new in "Glass House of Prejudice" its form is such that it might easily serve as a handbook on prejudice, its development and possible cure. Like Lillian Smith and others today she underscores the effects of prejudice on both the majority and minority groups. It will prove valuable to both.

Surprisingly informed the author refers to Dr. Gene Weltfish, in one instance as a man although Dr. Weltfish who collaborated with Dr. Ruth Benedict on "Races of Mankind" is a woman.

"Glass House of Prejudice" by Dorothy Baruch; William Morrow and Co.; New York City; 1946; $2.50.

• • •

Making of a Southerner

by Katherine Du Pre Lumpkin; $3.00.

The intellectual and spiritual autobiography of a Southern woman, revealing the traditions and manners of three generations of Southern life, and her own growth out of regional prejudices to a broad, liberal viewpoint. Miss Lumpkin is the author of a number of studies in the social sciences. Publishers are Alfred A. Knopf, 501 Madison ave., New York.

Slave and Citizen

Defender Chicago, Ill

The Negro in the Americas by Frank Tannenbaum; $2.00.

A study of the differing moral and legal attitudes toward the Negro in North America, South America, and the West Indies. The author, who has written widely on Latin America, criminology, and labor relations, is a professor of Latin American history at Columbia University. It is issued by Alfred A. Knopf, 501 Madison ave., New York.

W. E. B. DuBois

The Defender

Productive Scholarship

I WANT TO bring to the attention of my readers a specimen of productive scholarship such as we seldom see. I refer to a book called "A History of Free Masonry Among Negroes in America," by Harry E. Davis of Cleveland.

Usually we think of scholarly work only in connection with universities or by men devoted to letters. But we must remember that this is only because tradition, libraries and surroundings help the scholar usually in schools or in literary circles. Even in such case the work is often hurried, conventional and pedantic because the "scholar" is looking on his work as a means not as the end. The real scholar is searching for truth because he really wants to know and he holds himself rigorously to his self-imposed task by the hard rules of honesty, industry and common-sense. This Harry Davis has done with remarkable success.

Chicago, Ill.

Sat. 11-2-46

Negro Masonry

HIS SUBJECT is one long discussed. The existence of an order of Negro masons which is not recognized by the white masons of America. Much of the past discussion on this subject has been more or less emotional or with only partial collection of facts. Here comes an author who is a busy lawyer; who has held high position in the legislature and the civil service of Ohio. He devotes years to a careful study of the situation. Together with some worthy predecessors in the field he collects an astonishing body of facts. These facts have already been so influential that there is already a movement among the white masons to recognize the legitimacy of the black lodges.

But it is not enough merely to say this. It is a matter of careful digging into documents; testimony of all sorts, books, comparison of dates and indeed all of that careful scholarship which is the basis of modern science. And there can be no doubt of the complete job which Harry Davis has done. Not that it satisfies him. He knows as every scientific writer must know that with the best will, with long time and careful research, only part of a story is revealed. There is more, much more, which ought to be dug out. But he has fortunately taken the step of publishing for the world what he has accomplished. It is the bounden duty of every one interested in Negro organizations in the United States to read this book.

Segregation

THIS DOES not mean that they should read the book simply because they are interested in Negro secret societies but because it is a way of studying a method of fighting segregation. When the black man is set aside and not allowed to cooperate with his white fellows in any work, he can take two attitudes: he can refuse to do anything at all; or he can organize his own group and do the work which has to be done. It may be done poorly; he may have to use uneducated and inexperienced men, but if the work is of importance, it must be done no matter how it is done. If however, he goes further than this and like the Negro masons not only does the job but does a good job; sets up organizations who are performing their function just as well as the white organizations are; then in the long run something is going to break. If the white men are just, and numbers of them are, they are going to come to the time when they say, "this segregation by race is nonsense and got to be forgotten." And this is exactly what is beginning to happen among white masons. I do not mean to say that the final steps have been taken but the first step has and this shows the first proof of a wiping out of a segregation where people use their brains instead of their fists; who say a separate lodge, a separate school, a separate church based simply on facial characteristics is wrong but nevertheless we have got to have organizations, we have got to have churches, we have got to have education, and segregation or no segregation we are going to have the sort of lodge, school and church of which we can not only be proud but the whole world will join us. In the long run the world will come to us, even after they have in the beginning, kept us out.

Jack Conroy

The Defender

Nothing New

Chicago, Ill.

THERE'S NOTHING new under the sun, we're told; and another adage opines that history repeats itself. Two recent novels have appeared to substantiate these conditions. Both deal with a period in our history when the very life of the nation was at stake—the early days of the Civil War.

Sat. 6-29-46

Specific attention is directed to an organization calling itself the Knights of the Golden Circle and with pious hypocrisy avowing as its aim the immediate cessation of hostilities in order to save further bloodshed.

The Knights vested themselves with all the folderol of a secret order and employed the password "Nu-oh-lac" ("Calhoun" spelled backward). Though they clothed their intentions in the vague and high-sounding phrases common to secret societies and thus snared not a few sincere haters of war, the Knights in reality occupied themselves with the task of impairing as much as possible the effectiveness of the Northern war effort, harassing and even murdering Negroes and their white friends, obstructing the draft, and in general trying to bring a collapse of the federal arms and consequential victory for the Confederacy. "Copperheads" they were to patriotic northerners, and 80 years later President Roosevelt aptly revived the term in condemning the machinations of "stop-the-war" agitators during the conflict just ended. The Ku Klux Klan peddlers of hate who recently met amid smoky torches and burning crosses atop Stone Mountain are heirs of the "Knights of the Golden Circle."

The Wind Of Time

'The Unterrified' Is Hefty

CONSTANCE ROBERTSON'S "The Unterrified" (Holt, $3) is more hefty than "Fire Bell in the Night," her 1944 novel about the abolitionists. The weight is not expressed by the number of pages alone. There is evidence of prodigious and careful research, and—unusual for a novel—an extensive bibliography is appended. As in the former work, the locale is upper New York state.

Elderly Senator King, an anti-Lincoln Democrat and an admirer of Gov. Horatio Seymour, brings home a young wife from Kentucky. Ran, his son, is a sincere pacifist who wishes more than anything else to halt the carnage. But he soon falls under the spell of his beautiful stepmother and her friend, John Andrews, a Copperhead agent who is organizing a band called "The Unterrified." The New York draft riots and other events are required to teach Ran that one of the primary purposes of the group is expressed in their song:

"Tell Abe Lincoln to let the n——rs be,
Tell Abe Lincoln we don't want them free,
Tell Abe Lincoln that to this he did agree—
As we go marching on."

Miss Robertson's novel is heavily freighted with historical data, but it seldom becomes unwieldy. One might wish for more passion, but on the whole "The Unterrified" is both informative and entertaining.

The second novel, Leone Lowden's "Proving Ground" (McBride, $3), is less ambitious in scope than "The Unterrified," but it has positive virtues of its own. The scene is Sylvan Grove, Ind., and the book is mainly concerned with the mischievous activities of the Copperheads in the Hoosier State. Though these Civil War fifth columnists dominate the action, the battlefront is rather graphically recreated in letters written by Sylvan Grove soldiers to the folks at home. Somewhat more animated than Mrs. Robertson, Mrs. Lowden is less lavish with historical detail.

Impressionistic History

NORMAN ROSTEN, in "The Big Road" (Rhinehart, $3), has written an impressionistic history of the Alcan Highway to Alaska, built hastily (and unnecessarily from a military standpoint, it turned out) during the war through icy swamps and primeval forests, across mountains and rivers never before spanned by man. In the texture of the narrative poem, however, is the story of other roads important in the history of the world, and—more important—vividly credible personification of the ordinarily unsung men who labored to construct them.

African slaves built the Appian Way for the Roman masters; Pizarro transformed the great highway of the unmartial Incas into an avenue of destruction for its builders. The Wilderness Road of Daniel Boone was in places a mere wagon track, but it blazed the way through the Cumberland Gap for settlers pressing into a new land. The muckers and the mule-skinners, the Negro troops toiling long hours in bone-chilling water—these were the heroes of Alcan. Rosten vivifies them and their feats for us more compellingly than anyone has even attempted before.

Merchants of Chaos

The Times Book Review

"THE PLOTTERS. By John Roy Carlson. Illustrated. xii+408 pp. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $3.50.

New York, N.Y.

BY CHARLES G. BOLTE

IN "Under Cover" John Roy Carlson documented the hair-raising story of the campaign then being conducted by our native fascists to pave the way for Hitler's victory. In his new book, "The Plotters," he documents the even more hair-raising story of the campaign now raging to win a victory for Hitler after his death.

Sun. 11-17-46

The campaign described in "Under Cover" was startling and dangerous enough. The campaign described in "The Plotters" is clearly of greater danger and of incomparably greater significance. For in the unifying experience of the war—a relative unity imposed by the terrible danger from without—we forgot

York in The Louisville Times.

for a while our differences and banded together against the common enemy. The prophets of divided America went underground, encouraged in that direction by sedition indictments which imposed temporary silence, even though they did not bring jail sentences.

Now it is all different. Victory has seemed to carry with it a dissolvent of America's relative unity and relative selflessness. There is evidence of the quite general and tragic break-up of the moral fiber of the country since V-J Day in our return to the various petty ways of peace: the race of economic survival,

My time will come in the post-war period. The candidate will not be me; it will be a young veteran of this war. my candidate will be elected.

America First! but I'll be behind him. If business conditions are bad—inflation, widespread unemployment, farm foreclosures—then

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the inflation-deflation cycle, the

GERALD L. K. SMITH. the he said:

* * * Then the flame will spread, and the extreme nationalist will come to power. * * * When chaos comes, I'll be the leader.

America may require a smoother operator than Gerald Smith. Carlson several times quotes Huey Long's sage dictum that "fascism will come to America in the name of anti-fascism," and Smith is too easily identifiable for what he is. But, as a symbol of our present discontent, he will do; and the interlocking directorate of which he is a charter member is working overtime to capture what Carlson rightly calls "the most precious prize in post-war America"—the mind of the veteran.

That prize has not yet been taken by any group—and of course it will never be captured in toto, for the mind of the veteran is the composite mind of America. Two facts remain: of the many groups seeking the prize, a substantial number avow aims in the name of Americanism which are directly contrary to everything Americanism has ever meant; and among the veterans there is a considerable group which may prove susceptible—"when chaos comes"— to this phoney bait.

CARLSON estimates this group—the "unorganized, politically impressionable, socially semi-literate" veterans of two world wars—at 5,000,000. He estimates the "nationalist mob" at 15,000,000. These are the only two quantitative statements in the book I can remember for which no supporting evidence is offered; in view of the exhaustive accuracy of the volume as a whole I am willing to accept these estimates. They are not reassuring, when considered in the light of the resurgence of prewar isolationists, America Firsters, Bundists, Christian Fronters, Ku Kluxers and alleged seditionists whose operations "The Plotters" so minutely traces.

Carlson is a first-rate reporter, which means that he is a tireless legman. He names names, dates and places; he reproduces photostatic copies of letters, checks, posters and pamphlets; he records conversations; he takes nothing for granted. (The first time he came to see me in the offices of the American Veterans Committee, he said: "I wrote you under an assumed name the other day and liked your answer. Now I want to check up on it.")

This legwork, extending over the past several years—and carried on under the sponsorship of that singularly useful organization the Friends of Democracy—has resulted in 400 pages of facts which reveal a pattern of hate and divisiveness. It is the extreme right-wing groups, like the America First party, the Protestant War Veterans, the Society of Sentinels, the Fight for Free Enterprise, and so on, which Carlson rightly regards with most concern. The pattern of these and a couple of hundred like them is identical: anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic (except for the Coughlin type Catholic groups), anti-Negro, anti-labor, anti-foreign and, above all, anti-Communist (lumping together as "Communists" of course, all those who believe in peace, full employment, a healthy and well-educated America, equal opportunities for all, and the practice of the preamble to the Declaration of Independence!)

The plans and tactics of the real Communists (there are some) receive a thorough and devastating going over. Carlson recounts their efforts to win the mind of the veteran by infiltrating the established organizations, principally the American Legion. Although I found nothing but accurate reporting about Communists in the book, I judged from personal experience that Carlson will be called a "Red-baiter" by the faithful, whose definition of a "Red-baiter" in practice covers any one who says that Stalin is a Communist.

The analysis of the leading veterans' organizations seems to me eminently fair and reasonable. While it is not "well written," I cannot say a word against this book. It exposes the "mothers" racket. It relegates the Communists to their appropriate and relatively harmless little corner. It demonstrates the real danger—that the organized extreme nationalist movement can come to power. And it shows how average citizens can work for a democracy of peace and plenty in which the hate-mongers will find no market for their wares. If anybody is passing out Americanism awards this year, here's one vote for John Roy Carlson.

Charles G. Bolté is chairman of the American Veterans Committee, author of a book "The New Veteran" and of numerous magazine articles on the veteran. On graduating from Dartmouth and before Pearl Harbor, he enlisted in the British Army. He fought in North Africa and lost his right leg from wounds received at El Alamein.

darling of the abolitionists and the purists. More important, he was eaten by ambition. Like Seward he felt that the nomination should have gone to him; unlike Seward he continued to plan and plot for nomination—in 1864 and even in 1868. He was an able administrator, but his ambition was his undoing. He thought that he was indispensable and in a way he was—not himself but his following. Lincoln gave him plenty of rope, but drew the reins tight in the crisis of December, 1862; in the end, when his campaign to win the nomination in 1864 had become a scandal, Lincoln accepted his resignation.

The Times Book Review

THE problem that Cameron presented was a simple one. Cameron was monumentally corrupt, and when the disadvantages of corruption outbalanced the advantages of the support from his machine, Lincoln dismissed him. It is a nice question whether in the long run the nation would not have been better off had Cameron been retained. For though his successor, Stanton, was an able Secretary of War, fanatically honest and passionately energetic, he was a marplot and, in some ways, a traitor. Double-dealing, slippery, arrogant, high-handed, ruthless, an irrepressible intriguer and plotter, he almost wrecked the Lincoln and did wreck the Johnson Administration.

New York, N. Y.

Two members of the Cabinet stand out, in Mr. Hendrick's narrative, as loyal, able and honest: Gideon Welles of the wonderful diary, and brilliant Montgomery Blair of the great Blair clan. A third might be added, bluff old Edward Bates of Missouri, who, for all his Virginia birth, his South Carolina wife, his son in the Confederate Army, remained a passionate Unionist. These—with Seward after he was taught to come to heel—were Lincoln's mainstays.

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MR. HENDRICK has concentrated on the crises: the decision to relieve Fort Sumter, the Wilkes affair, the titanic controversy over McClellan, the Emancipation Proclamation, the war of the Blairs on Chase, and others. It is all familiar enough, yet told with freshness and insight and, above all, judiciousness.

How judicious Mr. Hendrick is can best be gathered from a careful reading of the chapters on the Cabinet and McClellan. For here Mr. Hendrick has performed a near-miracle—he has exposed the pernicious chicanery of the Radical war on McClellan without championing McClellan's generalship! His is not a military history, but he gives us enough of McClellan's story so that we can understand how wanting he was in the qualities necessary for military victory and how dangerous was his own strong admixture of politics with military office.

Mr. Hendrick has relied, in his narrative, on familiar sources—the diaries of Welles, Chase and Bates, the mysterious "Diary of a Public Man," the letters of Seward, the papers of Lincoln, the scores and hundreds of other original narratives which have come down to us in such profusion. Yet he has fitted all this miscellany together with such skill that the result is a triumph of art and of scholarship alike. Nowhere else in our literature, in equal compass, can we find so shrewd an analysis of Lincoln's relations with his official family, of the personal and factional strains and stresses of the Administration, or of those qualities of character which enabled Mr. Lincoln, in the end, to establish his supremacy and to insure victory in the field, in foreign affairs and in politics.

The Times Book Review

There is only one criticism of the book that can legitimately be made: it is far too short. Important chapters of Cabinet history are neglected, interesting minor figures ignored, large areas of foreign and domestic policy not only unsurveyed but unglimpsed. A companion volume on Lincoln and the politicians is called for.

New York, N.Y.

For Solid Senders

The Times Book Review

SHINING TRUMPETS. By Rudi Blesh. illustrated. 365 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

By FREDERIC RAMSEY JR.

New York, N.Y.

"SHINING TRUMPETS" deals with a phase of jazz music little known to the average reader or listener. "A half-dozen kinds of music bearing no structural relation to jazz are accepted by the vast public," Mr. Blesh informs us in his Introduction, "not only as jazz, but each as its only form." In his book, Mr. Blesh undertakes to straighten us out as to that kind of music which he considers to be jazz, or which jazz is Jazz.

Sun. 12-8-46

In recent years many histories concerned with these "half-dozen kinds" have appeared and heightened interest in a much-discussed American music. However, no scholar has investigated special aspects of that music as they relate to cultural traditions of the American Negro. Conditions favoring preparation of such a work are good, due to the untiring efforts of collectors like John A. and Alan Lomax, and scholars, like Dorothy Scarborough, Lydia Parrish, John H. Cox and Newman White, who have published collections of both music and basic data. And in the field of anthropology, Prof. Melville J. Herskovits of Northwestern University has contributed much to our knowledge of "ancestral cultures of Africa and the survivals of Africanism in the new world."

Basing his approach on this body of scholarship, Mr. Blesh asserts that: "A thorough treatment of jazz as music not only deals with the American Negro but goes all the way back to Africa. It carries both the writer and reader into questions of deep sociological import relating to * * * general considerations of our society, into equally general, equally vital ones concerning all music and all art."

A LIFETIME of study and research could easily go into the preparation of such a vast work. Of the characteristics of the Negro, generally, Mr. Blesh states: "Anyone who has watched the Negro in athletics or ballet is aware of the different quality of his movements. Psychologists different in a shade of feeling throughout the cosmic enthusiasm and assertions of its author. Its organization is essentially sound; it is divided into two books, the first dealing with the African musical heritage and its transference with the slaves to America, and the second tracing the origin (in New Orleans, if that need be said again) of jazz and its develop-

His turgid style is unfortunate. "It is this phrasing," Mr. Blesh says of blues sung by Ma Rainey, Paul Robeson and Marian Anderson, capable of great creative work, devote their powers to the mere interpretation of European repertory and Europeanized Negro music."

New York, N.Y.

12-8-46

he dismisses their acculturation summarily: "Today Negroes like

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another point, he asserts that in "List of Record Citations" are all vast gamut which was hers."

"The great many of his readers will find drummer: "The strength and purity of rhythmic American Negro music as European" music as American Negroes,

9 1946

BOOKS AND THINGS

Herald-Tribune, New York, N. Y.

By LEWIS GANNETT

THEY say that Americans are not a singing people, but there is the record of the Hutchinson family to confound such skeptics Philip D. Jordan, a history professor with an obvious frustrated passion to become a novelist, tells their story in "Singin' Yankees" (University of Minnesota Press, $3.50). 5-22-46

The Singing Sons and Daughters of Jesse

It was about 1839 that signs were posted on the Town House of Milford, N. H., and in the covered bridge, proclaiming that "The eleven sons and two daughters of the tribe of Jesse will sing at the Baptist Meeting-house on Thanksgiving Evening at 7 oclock." Old Jesse Hutchinson liked to hear his children chant the anthem written to commemorate the conversion of Deacon Giles's distillery into a temperance hall: "King Alcohol is very sly, A liar from the first, He'll make you drink until you're dry, Then drink because you thirst." But Jesse got tired of the eternal noise; he made his children practice outside the house, behind a rock in the hay field, and he refused to contribute a cent when four of his offspring set off for Boston to study singing. They earned their way: one as a typesetter, another sawing wood, and two tending store. One, to his own distaste, even served rum and whisky by the glass, which was then a normal part of grocery-store routine.

New York, N. Y. Herald-Tribune 5-22-46 9

The Hutchinson family, from a lithograph by G. & W. Endicott, 1843

They called themselves the "Aeolian Vocalists" when they gave their first pay concert by candlelight in East Wilton, N. H., for a net profit of six and a half cents. Already they had composed, and set to gospel music, the song that was to make them famous, "We've come down from the mountains of the Old Granite State," ending with a recitative of the thirteen Hutchinsons' Biblical names. In the summer of 1842, in a two-horse $75 carryall, three brothers and twelve-year-old sister Abby set out on tour upstate to Dartmouth, across the Connecticut River to Woodstock, Vt., down through Saratoga Springs to Albany and back East to Boston. Musical success came faster in those days than in this. The success of the Hutchinson family's first concert, in Melodeon Hall in Boston, on Sept. 13, led them to engage the hall again on Sept. 17, and to give a third performance on the 20th.

Herald-T "Get Off the Track" 5-22-46

They sang temperance songs, a tear-jerker called "The Vulture of the Alps," and stirring anti-slavery songs composed by the Hutchinsons themselves, such as "Get Off the Track" ("the Emancipation train is coming") and "The Bereaved Slave Mother." The public loved their home-grown balladry. They even sang in Niblo's Garden and Saloon in New York for a fee of $500, which must have hurt their teetotal consciences. They toured England, and while London was cool, Charles Dickens invited them to dinner and the provinces welcomed them.

Then came trouble. The stay-at-home brothers were jealous; they formed a rival troop, billed under the same name and singing the same songs. The original group broke up. Some of the boys married, and the wives wanted to sing, too. Some formed other partnerships; at one time five different Hutchinson combinations were on tour. And eventually their insistence upon anti-slavery songs got them roundly hissed in New York and barred from the halls in St. Louis.

For almost half a century some of the singing Hutchinsons were on tour. One group of Hutchinsons toured the mining camps of California in the 1850s. Another helped popularize "John Brown's Body" at the beginning of the Civil War; it was they who made "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground" familiar toward the end of the war. Mr. Jordan acutely points out that the early Civil War songs were belligerent the later ones homesick, as in other wars; the author and composer of the mournful strains of "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground," an old New Hampshire friend of the Hutchinsons, was a soldier himself.

One of the original group died of a fever, but his voice continued to be heard, by William Lloyd Garrison among others, at the spiritualistic seances conducted by the Fox Sisters. One became insane and committed suicide. Still another helped found twin pioneer communities named Harmony and Hutchinson, in Minnesota. New York, N.Y.

Singing for Peace

John Hutchinson survived longest. It was he who, at Cooper Union in 1870, put across "The Drunkard's Child" ("You ask me why so oft, father, the tear rolls down my cheek. . . . It breaks my heart to think that I am called a drunkard's child.") He sang at the Republican National Convention of 1892 and in 1905 went to Portsmouth to sing the disputing Russians and Japanese into peace. He was eighty-four at the time. The outlanders didn't listen to him, but a fifty-year-old singing teacher from Washington fell in love with him and married him.

All this is rich Americana. Unfortunately, to get at the gist of the story, one has to wade through Mr. Jordan's earnest efforts to reproduce Hutchinson family conversation as he thinks it may have sounded. Mr. Jordan is better as historian than novelist, and the facts are eloquent enough without fictional grace notes. For the Hutchinsons were American folk singers of significance. From our smug plateau of 1946 it is pleasant to recall that a century ago they were singing "There's a good time coming, boys, A good time coming. . . . Nations shall not quarrel then, To prove which is the stronger."

'EXPERIMENT IN REBELLION'

New and Valuable Picture Of Southern Confederacy

The Constitution, Atlanta, Ga. Sun. 11-24-46

EXPERIMENT IN REBELLION, by Clifford Dowdey; Doubleday; $4.

It was a strangely assorted group of men that was called together to form the government of the new Confederate States of America in 1861. The President wanted to be a soldier, not a statesman. The Vice President was expressing doubts about the whole secession experiment. The Secretary of War was so derisive of the prospect of war that he was promising to wipe up all the spilled blood with his handkerchief. The Secretary of State was a man of violence and intemperate language. All of them had been Unionists at one time; half of them openly had opposed secession.

These men "who played at being giants" are the central figures in this "Experiment in Rebellion." They played their roles for history but they never grasped the realities of their situation.

As Clifford Dowdey puts it, the Confederate leaders never understood that their cause was revolution and that revolution succeeds only with force. The Southern States seceded and set up a government; then they sat back and regarded their handiwork as an accomplished fact. They never awoke to the reality that independence had to be won and could not be achieved merely by a declaration.

This is the theme upon which Dowdey builds a book that has an incredibly fresh tang about it, considering all that has been written about the War Between the States in the years since Appomattox. His approach is the personalities and policies of the Confederate leaders, his locale is Richmond, the capital and arsenal of the Confederacy. He goes beyond these limits only as necessary to implement his story.

Dowdey has here all the mastery of words, all the artistry of language, that has won him an outstanding place in the historical fiction field. The introductory chapter alone is worth the price of admission for its summary of the basic background of the conflict. And, though he deals with individuals, he never allows the reader to forget the anonymous masses of the war. The result is a new and valuable picture of the Southern Confederacy and the reasons for its creation and fall.

BOB PRICE

Flower of the South

The Times Book Review, New York, N. Y.

EXPERIMENT IN REBELLION. By Clifford Dowdey. Illustrated. 455 pp. New York: Doubleday & Co. $3.75.

By WILLIAM B. HAMILTON

IN "Bugles Blow No More," a novel which appeared a decade ago, Clifford Dowdey wrote of the impact of the Civil War on Richmond. In "Experiment in Rebellion" he returns to the same scene, but eschews the dilution of fiction and takes his history straight. An ambitious volume in both size and scope, it surveys phases of the history of the Confederate Government, the character of its leaders, the military strategy of the war, and life in Richmond under fire—the South from slave market to Newmarket to black market. It is a worthy addition to the vast literature on the great climax of the drama of America. This year's Civil War books alone fill a decent shelf; one of them, A. H. Bill's "The Beleaguered City," largely parallels Mr. Dowdey's study. Sun. 12-1-46

Undaunted by the volume of these writings, Mr. Dowdey has read widely and well in them. He has profited especially from the monographs in which scholars in Southern universities, for a generation, have been piling up the facts. He exhibits a capacity for comprehending, digesting, and even facing what might be called revisionist interpretations, and has thus been enabled to write a popular summary of this scholarship that can safely be recommended to that coddled creature, the general reader.

Among the manifold contents of "Experiment in Rebellion" are sketches of members of the Confederate Cabinet and especially of President Jefferson Davis, and accounts of the diplomacy, Navy, finance, and ordnance of the Confederacy. Judah P. Benjamin receives his customary rough handling; he is a sybarite, devoted to his ease and to maintaining the favor of Davis.

Mr. Dowdey makes a sincere effort to be sympathetic with Davis but fails, in the best Virginia tradition. He sees Davis as a theoretical, inelastic intellectual, fighting for a feudal code and a legalistic constitutional position. Impatient of opposition in his chosen field of military operations, he was tolerant and even meek about mere political wrecking by the States' Righters. Aloof from the people, he lived in his own world and, at the end, says Mr. Dowdey, took refuge first in the role of border chieftain hunted across his own lands,

FOR the diplomatic policy of the C. S. A., based on the assumption that England and France would intervene because (1) the United States blockade deprived them of cotton and (2) the blockade was not effective,

men of individuality, and not the feudal South typified by Davis, they were equally archaic. Against them Grant was the man of the machine, of the new age waiting impatiently to cover the land with uniformity." The America of Roosevelt, Ickes, Patton, Bilbo and Henry Ford cannot mourn the passing of individuality. Anyway, the old South had its own uniformity of behavior to which the gentleman was expected to aspire, and it tried to make everyone conform in social dogma. No dangerous thoughts were allowed.

On what should have been his main line, if his title means anything, not even a long introduction entitled "The Nature of the Experiment" offers any dissection of the methods or course pursued by this rebellion as a rebellion or as compared, say, with other rebellions. The stimulating hint is thrown out that the South, instead of using methods appropriate to a rebel band fighting for its life, tried to fight and finance as a settled nation. This interesting thesis is not expanded. *The Times Book Review*

PERHAPS the lack of a clear purpose can be blamed partly for the faults of style which mar this book. There are all the signs of hasty writing, without enough planning or revision. The effort to avoid a topical arrangement adds to the confusion which the well-nigh total absence of dates does nothing to dispel. Furthermore, it is written in the vernacular, replete with breezy, topical slang and colloquialisms. Such a style ill befits the epic story the author has to tell. *New York, N.Y.*

In one way, Mr. Dowdey comes near realizing that old jesting wish for impartial history from a Southern viewpoint. The United States generals do not find favor with him; the atrocities and pillaging are all on one side. And certainly he recites impartially the blundering, the desertion, the disloyalty in the Southern ranks and impartially demolishes most of the Southern leadership. Reasons for the failure of the Confederacy are made clear. Some day we will have a book explaining how the Confederates held out for four years. *Sun 12-1-46*

The Pearl of the Antilles: A Birdseye View

The Times Book Review

CUBA. By Erna Fergusson. 308 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.75.

New York, N.Y.

By MILDRED ADAMS

OVER twenty years ago, Joseph Hergesheimer startled American readers with a fine novel about Cuba in which neither Teddy Roosevelt nor the Rough Riders were even mentioned. Now comes Erna Fergusson, writing a general survey of modern Cuba, with attitudes as iconoclastic and with information much more detailed. For her, as for Hergesheimer, the best historians and all Cubans, the Spanish-American war was the mis-named end of a long struggle in which the Cubans did most of the work and the Americans claimed all the glory.

Apparently American soldiers were as badly briefed then as to what they were fighting for as they have subsequently been. Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst told them they went to war because General Weyler put starving Cubans into filthy concentration camps, because the beautiful Evangelina Cisneros needed rescuing from a fate worse than death, because the Spaniards sank the Maine in Havana harbor. Nobody seems to have told soldiers or officers that the Cubans themselves had been fighting for their own independence for thirty years and had it almost won, that many towns in the province of Oriente were in Cuban hands before a single American started, that only by virtue of Cuban knowledge of the country and the enemy could the American army hope to succeed. *Sun 12 8-4*

"With Cuban aid in planning and in operation, our men made an amphibious landing unopposed. Their equipment was elderly; their training was spotty. They were dressed in heavy blue winter uniforms and wore long blue overcoats which they shed as heat and the jungle went to work on them. General Joseph Wheeler, in command at the battle of Las Guasimas, had not changed even his language since he led his last Confederate charge: as his men moved against the Spaniards he was seen to wave his saber and shout, "Come on, boys, we've got the damned Yankees on the run!"

It took twenty-six days of sea and land attack, carried on with the aid of Cuban patriots, to persuade the Spaniards to surrender Santiago. And then the Americans, raising the triumphant Stars and Stripes, refused to let the worn and bloody banner of Cuban liberation go up alongside.

PERHAPS for the very reason that Cuba is so close at hand, good popular books about it are rare, and too many have been pompously patronizing or angrily critical. Erna Fergusson falls into neither pit. While she does not disregard American political and economic influence, neither does she over-emphasize it. In a period when despair is much more fashionable than hope she notes the good as well as the bad, the progress as well as the problems. *12-8-46*

She has managed to cram in a little of everything without confusion or surfeit—not too much sugar or scenery, not too much history or too many personalities, not too many native customs or American divergences, not too much of graft, gambling or culture. Her well-proportioned book brings the reader up to date on Machado and Batista, and prepares him for President Grau San Martin.

In the same tone of cheerful realism she uncovers the tale of how the famous message to Garcia really got there, and what it was that put Hobson in peril of the kisses of American women for a generation after he got back. Neither seems to have been exactly as advertised at the time, or in the school books since.

For the benefit of other authors contemplating plans for books about other countries—and now that Americans can travel again without uniforms the tide will certainly swell—it may be pointed out that Miss Fergusson's formula for success in presenting a sympathetic portrait of a Latin American neighbor is not to be achieved between plane stops. Not only is Erna Fergusson dowered with a seeing eye and an inquiring mind, but she grew up speaking Spanish and has already written about three other Spanish countries in this hemisphere. Some eighteen months ago she left Washington to begin research in Cuba, and the results of extensive first-hand observation shine on every page. She has also done home-work in a library containing the best Cuban as well as North American writing on Cuban problems. The combination produces sound and lively reporting, as well-balanced as it is informed.

Cuban Farmer.

Antonio Gattorno.

Book Reviews

The Afro-American

by J. Saunders Redding

("SHINING TRUMPETS, A HISTORY OF JAZZ," by Rudi Blesh, New York, Knopf Publisher, 365 pp. with appendices, $5).

Baltimore, Md.

Four or five books treating of jazz and jazz musicians have been published in the past six months.

This fact is probably of a social significance beyond my immediate comprehension and therefore beyond my power to explain.

Until very recently jazz music had always seemed to me a rather degrading kind of cheap excitement, and jazz musicians were, I thought, merely men who made inexcusably vulgar sounds, particularly through horns.

One of the things that bothered me most about jazz music, was what it did to some people. I do not like to see people go glassy-eyed and slobber-mouthed and get so completely "sent" as to know little and to care even less what they do or what happens to them.

A Prejudice

And jazz music does that to some people. It "sends" them into all sorts of obscene behavior, attitudes, and frenzies.

But, slowly, I began to realize that to dislike jazz music for what some people allowed it to do to them was about as reasonable as to dislike egg nog (or strawberry ice cream, or Baptist religion) for what some people allowed it to do to them.

And once I had discovered that my prejudice was really a prejudice, and that I was nursing it, I tried to do something about it. I hate just plain prejudice more than anything.

Now prejudices, even when we recognize them as such, are hard to be rid of, and I made practically no headway through a stack of jazz records, nor through a half dozen books.

Had to Back Up

Ulanov's biography of Duke Ellington helped me just a little. Virgil Thomson's "The Musical Scene" helped a little more. But "Really the Blues," by Mezzrow, made me pause and back up and wonder whether to start all over again, like the jumper who, coming to the barrier, finds it higher than he thought.

Then there came to my attention a book called "Shining Trumpets," by Rudi Blesh.

It is a sub-titled history—and a very good history—of American music, of which Afro-American music is by far the greater part. *Sat. 15-7-47*

New Art Form

Highly technical in some of its language, the book is based on an expert knowledge of the whole field of music, and on the theme that jazz is a valuable art form, freer and more pure than any art form created in America.

"Shining Trumpets" goes back historically to musical backgrounds in Africa; culturally it looks forward to a period of ever greater musical creativeness in America.

Here is the history of all those known and unknown creators from the slave-cabin singers and banjo players to the revived Bunk Johnson.

It Moves

"Jazz, whether played by black man or by white man, is a music which has moved out of the long night. It moves—and its very movement is a message. Rich and moody, infinitely wise and wisely gay, it is a summons to life. This message, in the largest sense and as involved in the deepest relations of an art to human life, is the real creative meaning of American jazz."

If I cannot go all the way with the author on this conclusion, it is because some of my prejudice is with me yet. But "Shining Trumpets" is a good book that is probably important, and I recommend it to those who would like to acquire an intelligent appreciation of jazz.

Aptheker's Vital Pamphlet On the Negro in America

Daily Worker New York, N.Y. Thurs. 11-28-46

By Samuel Sillen

IN **The Negro People in America** (International Publishers, 35 cents) Herbert Aptheker has made another vital contribution to scientific thinking about the Negro question. This new pamphlet is a timely and brilliant analysis of Gunnar Myrdal's two-volume study, **An American Dilemma.**

Myrdal's work has exercised considerable influence since its appearance two years ago. Dr. Myrdal, noted Swedish economist, was invited here by the Carnegie Foundation. His book, based on a five-year study, was widely hailed as a "monumental" and "definite" survey of the Negro question in America.

This claim is refuted by Aptheker in a compact analysis of Myrdal's thinking, his misstatements of fact, and his erroneous interpretation of the scientific data available to him.

The very title of Myrdal's work is a key to his major premise. For the word "dilemma," as Apetheker points out, suggests a choice between "equally unsatisfactory alternatives." Fundamentally, Myrdal regards the Negro question as "**insoluble.** His approach is that of a liberal reformer who wants somehow to improve matters, but who does not wish to challenge the social basis of discrimination and oppression.

Myrdal repudiates the materialist concept of society. He regards the Negro question as a moral issue, something "in the heart of America." What is needed, therefore, is a change in "the heart" of man. It follows that improvement must be very gradual. We must rely on benevolence, an expanding good will.

Subjecting this idealist view to a rigorous analysis, Aptheker lays bare the bourgeois values of Myrdal's approach. In denying class interest, Myrdal himself conveys a class bias. His subjectivism leads to an evasion of economic and social reality.

* * *

APTHEKER'S Marxist analysis of Myrdal's thinking has significance far beyond the particular work under discussion. For Myrdal's analysis of the Negro question as a moral question is symptomatic of a growing body of literature which includes, for example, the writings of Lillian Smith and Richard Wright. It is notable that Cayton and Drake, in their **Black Metropolis**, conclude that perhaps "the Negro question—given the moral flabbiness of America—is incapable of solution."

Such defeatism is inevitably linked to a conception that this is primarily a problem of "the heart." Of course there are deep moral issues involved in the hideous injustice of segregation and lynching. And of course every effort should be made to rouse people's moral sensibilities. But the moral approach of a Myrdal, while giving the appearance of liberalism, actually shields the class nature of oppression. This in turn diverts men's minds and energies from social action. And in the end such morality becomes immoral, for it helps perpetuate the status quo.

It is ironical that Myrdal and his followers should criticize Marxism for its "do-nothing fatalism." Aptheker ably punctures this myth. And his own pamphlet, with its emphasis on scientific clarity coupled with a call for effective social action, is a striking answer to those who say that materialists "passively" wait for laws of history to fulfill themselves.

* * *

IN addition to a searching critique of Myrdal's ideology, Aptheker gives us a sober refutation of his "history." He shows how Myrdal misjudges the active role of the Negroes in the period of slavery as well as during Reconstruction.

Aptheker's pamphlet is an outstanding example of Marxist polemical writing. He assembles a complex body of materials, presents them with great simplicity, persuasiveness and passion. This work is solidly documented, but never academic. It has a driving energy. It combines a respect for theory with a painstaking devotion to the concrete fact. It is an intellectually exciting pamphlet which carries forward those pioneer studies for which every serious student of the Negro in America is indebted to Aptheker.

As Doxey Wilkerson writes in an introduction to this work: 11-28-46

"It has truly been said that the most practical thing in the world is a sound theory. In terms of this premise, Herbert Aptheker's theoretical critique of **An American Dilemma** contributes mightily to the practical struggles now gaining momentum for the attainment of full democratic rights and security for Negroes and all other Americans."

Jack Conroy

Daily Worker

Work Overdue

A BOOK long overdue is Owen Dodson's "Powerful Long Ladder" (Farrar, Straus and Co., $2.50). This is not to say that the publisher purposely has dallied or that the 32-year-old Negro poet has not been industrious or productive. Readers of such magazines as **Common Ground, the Crisis, Opportunity, Theatre Arts,** and **Tomorrow** have been sampling Dodson's wares with relish for quite some time, and one of his plays was produced by the theater group that brought "Anna Lucasta" to Broadway. It is just that admirers of Dodson's scattered poems are here given for the first time an opportunity to see them in collected form.

They bear up well under the scrutiny. Dodson is a poet of considerable versatility and a wide range of invention. This collection includes verse dramas such as "Someday We're Gonna Tear Them Pillars Down" and "Winter Chorus," lyrics (notably "Reunion") which stand comparison with Claude McKay's early work, and some of the strong and bitter things every alert and socially-minded Negro poet is bound to write.

Reaction to War

Chicago, Ill.

SINCE DODSON was in the Navy during the late conflict, it is not surprising to find several poems evolved from his military experience or his emotional response to the war. One of the most moving is "Black Mother Praying," in which a Negro mother thinks of the soldiers, "black sons in lands far as the wind can go." She continues her prayer: 11-24-46

"We thinkin' deep 'bout they sisters stitchin' airplane canvas,
And they old fathers plowin' for wheat,
And they mothers bendin' over washtubs,
They brothers at the factory wheels:
They all is bein' body beat and spirit beat and heart sore and wonderin'
Listen, Lord, they ain't nowhere for black mothers to turn.
Won't you plant your Son's goodness in this land
Before it is too late?
Set your stars of sweetness twinklin' over us like winda lamps
Before it is too late?
Help these men to see they losing while they winnin'.
Long as they allow theyselves to lynch in the city streets and on country roads."

Sat.

The appearance of Owen Dodson's poems, like that of Gwendolyn Brooks' "A Street in Bronzeville," in an event to celebrate. It affirms that the People's Poet — one who can speak to the masses in terms they can comprehend and identify intimately with their own experiences and yet maintain the traditional excellencies of his craft—is not a figure of speech but a breathing man.

Elizabeth Maddox Roberts in "The Time of Man" wrote a novel which is likely to survive as one of the classics of American fiction. It was the simple and unadorned story of a girl who married a poor farmer and spent her undramatic years in childbearing, toil, and denial—helping her husband to wrest a living from stony soil. Mrs. Roberts' compassion was so warm and her understanding so keen that she made her novel much more memorable than many with material basically more interesting and exciting.

A SOUTHERN SURGEON'S ROMANCE

The News Birmingham, Ala.

IN A DARK GARDEN, by Frank G. Slaughter. Published by Doubleday & Co.; 435 pages, $2.75.

Written aboard a hospital ship in the Pacific by a competent surgeon-novelist, this romantic novel deals well with the War Between the States. The battles of Vicksburg and Chickamauga are not given in the usual general strategic patterns, but from the individualistic standpoint of a young surgeon forced to subjugate himself to the greatest good for the greatest number. Although Slaughter joins James Street in his "Valor and Arms" accusation against the "Virginia mind that had concentrated on spectacular victory in the East and permitted the Confederacy to be severed in the West," this is not a story of the vastness of the battles, but of the courage of a young medical man honing his scalpels in the flicker of a wagon lantern and listening to the bullfrog cacophony of snores in the woods around him. Sat. 11-30-46

Early in his life Julian Chisholm fights against "the old Southern matrix no man can escape if he's well born." Although his father wants him to assume charge of their vast, beautiful plantation and hundreds of slaves, Julian insists on going abroad to study medicine. One a visit home he falls in love with his brother's luscious widow, Lucy, who blandly says she isn't wicked, merely honest. Lucy, however, marries Sen. Sprague, a Northern senator who is making a fortune running the blockade to profiteer on the South. In 1862, his training completed, Julian finds himself stranded in Glasgow, eager to return home and serve in the Confederate medical corps. He meets Jane Anderson, widow of a Confederate officer who needs a husband badly if she is to return to Georgia and fight for her estates. Lacking the price of passage, Julian accepts her offer of marriage. In the course of an eventful voyage, he finds he is very much in love with her. His love persists even when he finds she is an agent for the United States government, engaged in conducting an underground railway for prisoners. But he is not entirely free of the charms of Lucy, and this is a thing to be contended with as he attempts to make his wife-in-name an entity in fact.

Julian buries himself in battle. His genius as a surgeon asserts itself wherever he goes. Much of the writing in the book deals with detailed descriptions of the operations he performs. Each bit of surgery is a major skirmish filled with the conflict of a physical struggle. At Vicksburg, Julian braves open fire to make his way to a muddy shell crater where a soldier is pinned by his leg underneath a gun carriage. Upon completing a magnificent amputation which saves the man's life, he is not disturbed when he learns the patient was a Yankee. Even the most casual reader will follow avidly Julian's pioneering in operations for appendicitis and trepanning of the skull.

The futility of the position of the South prevails throughout the book. "The South is fighting the future," says Macalastair the overseer. "Those who fight the future are always doomed. We went into this war with a flourish. Chivalry against the shopkeepers. Look back on that crusade clearly—listen to the trumpets of our cause: you can't miss the tinny note in that battle cry of freedom. Since when has there been any personal freedom in the South—except for a few thousand dandies on top?" He deplores the dream of feudalism in such a young and promising country. And he resents the young men who fight for the enjoyment of the fighting, although they fight for those above them.

As the war ends, a noble Negro doctor foresees the plight of his people. "We have our freedom now—on paper," he says. "For a long time that freedom will do us more harm than slavery. The men who owned us once will use every trick in the book to keep us in their power: we are much too useful to them just as we are. . . ." The entire approach of Frank Slaughter in his book is a sane one, drawing with finesse the thin lines of distinction. But, most of all, it is a good story which appeals to the imagination in much the way such novels as "Anthony Adverse" and "Gone With the Wind" have done. It moves over a wide territory, both geographically and thematically, but it moves in graceful design.—CHARLES WHITE McGEHEE.

Lampell's 'Long Way Home' Fine Study of Returning Vet

Daily Worker New York, N.Y. Tues. 10-29-46

"Soldiers coming back are people coming back," says Joe Topinka, "hero" of **Welcome the Traveller Home**, which is unique among these 14 radio plays about returning airmen in that Joe is a perfectly healthy, normal, matter-of-fact young guy whose only problem in returning to civilian life is the insistence of everybody that there should be a problem. For the characters in the other 13 scripts, the situation and conflicts are a lot tougher: discrimination and prejudice; emotional and economic insecurity; adjustment to plastic surgery and amputation. But in all of them the fight is the fight of the human spirit.

The author was a staff sergeant in the AAF and the plays were written, during the last year of the war, as a military assignment. They were first produced by the Second AAF Radio Unit and broadcast over the Columbia network. They have been repeated many times, and they are good to read.

TO BE MEN

In **Case History** you meet Lieut. Fred Ashboro, a fighter pilot, returned to the United States after 14 combat missions in the Mediterranean Theatre. He is suffering from "psychosomatic cerebral disturbance. Pains in the head resulting from anxiety. Cause unknown." So Fred and the doctor set out to find the cause—the wound.

MILLARD LAMPELL

As Fred painfully unfolds the story of his life you become aware of one central, salient fact: he is a Negro. And then the pattern becomes clear: the bitter struggle against poverty and humiliation; the achievement of a college degree; lack of money to go further; enlistment in the Air Corps and attainment, with his flier's skill, of a feeling of dignity and value. The key was his "good-luck charm": a quotation from Frederick Douglas. ". . . Never since the world began was a better chance offered to a long enslaved and oppressed people. The opportunity is given us to be men. . . ."

But with his removal from flying status, Fred feels that this opportunity is taken away—that his weapon is lost. Here is the wound, the cause of the pains. The doctor helps him to realize that flying a P-40 is not the only weapon: "Law school, that's a weapon, too." And with the GI Bill of Rights, this new weapon is available.

Then there's Ernie Santini, in **The Wound Shat Shows No Scars.** Ernie's wound is fear of not being able to keep a job, and the memory of his father who returned proudly from the last war, got a job hauling ashes, and eventually lost even that.

This script ends with a question: "Is the nation ready for these men who have fought our war and are coming home? We must send them to college, give them loans, help them build homes and get started in business. They fought a war for us. Are we ready to build a peace for them?" Today, two years later, the question is still hanging over us, but much more urgently.

There's **The Boy From Nebraska,** a tall gunner with two DFC's but the wrong kind of name: Kuroki. There's Ed McKenny, with his face and his voice burnt away, but restored by surgery, sympathy and a fighting will. There's Pete Seeger, with his empty sleeve; and Danny O'Brien, who left a leg somewhere in Europe. And many more, all drawn straight from life by a skilful craftsman who traveled 20,000 miles to see and know them.

Royalties on **The Long Way Home** go to the Committee for Air Forces Convalescent Welfare. There are two short forewords by Air Force Colonels telling about the AF convalescent hospital system and the Personnel Distribution Command.

But there is no wild blue glamour in the guys whose stories are told. They know their problem is the same as the ex-rifleman's, the ex-cannoneer's, the ex-tankers. And they also know that their problem does not—must not—separate them from the rest of the country. They know that it is part of the big problem—the people's problem.

This book should be a valuable textbook for students of radio. The plays are technically sound, and have been proved by performance. They show what planned, collective work can accomplish in radio. As the author says in his Production Notes, "It was strictly a cooperative deal and everyone had a critical voice." In our society and within the restrictions of the military, it is hard to see how a better job could have been done.

There is a Preface by William Rose Benet. He says to please read the book. —A. W.

. . . Carefully Revealed

The Times Book Review New York, N.Y. Sun. 10-27-46

NORTH AND SOUTH. By Elizabeth Bishop. 54 pp. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.

By SELDEN RODMAN

GOOD music, and almost every good picture that has been painted since Cézanne and his followers abstracted the symbolic truth from the moribund literal image, resists description in terms of other media. But poetry, despite metaphor, generalization and persistent effort in our time to make the rhythmic pattern, without which it is nothing, supreme, by its very nature resists abstraction. If the author of the thirty-two remarkable poems in this book used paint, she would undoubtedly paint "abstractions." Yet so sure is her feeling for poetry that in building up her over-all water-color arrangements she never strays far from the concrete and the particular.

"The Fish" is a case in point. There has not been a poem like it, I think, since Richard Eberhart's "The Groundhog," but Miss Bishop approaches her symbol more impersonally, and the diction is less mannered. "The Map," "Roosters," "Florida" and "Songs for a Colored Singer" are equally successful and memorable, but in some of the more complicated poems Miss Bishop falls victim to her own virtuosity. Sophisticated innocence now and again recalls standard New Yorker light verse. Marianne Moore's affectation of dressing up clichés in single quotes remains affectation.

Lines like "The wit of these white peaks spar with the sun" fail to avoid conceit: the juxtaposition of archaic or literary language with the vernacular is not always expertly enough handled to rise above the epithets quaint, pert, sly and distinguished. To quote Miss Bishop twice out of context, things "carefully revealed, made delicate by overworkmanship" tend sometimes to leave the reader in a position from which, "secure in introspection, he peers at the watery pillars of his reflection."

Why quibble? There is enough poetry and sheer delight in this slender volume to make a pedant out of any critic. It could even be that Miss Bishop had this perverse creature in mind when betraying sympathy for her "Man-Moth":

If you catch him
hold up a flashlight his eye.
It's all dark pupil,
an entire night itself, whose
haired horizon tightens
as he stares back, and closes up
the eye. Then from the lids
one tear, his only possession,
like the bee's sting, slips.
Slyly he palms it, and if you're
not paying attention
he'll swallow it. However, if
you watch, he'll hand it
over,
cool as from underground
springs and pure enough to
drink.

Dexter Writes The Call New Book

Kansas City, Mo.

'Jazz Cavalcade' Is Plea For Racial Tolerance

Fri. 11-22-46

HOLLYWOOD. — Dave Dexter, white, brilliant jazz critic and benefactor of many talented and deserving musicians, gave literary impetus to his long fight for racial tolerance in his recently published book, "Jazz Cavalcade," in which he lashed out at the racial bias of radio networks and certain motion picture studios and makes a plea for abolishment of racial discrimination.

Dexter, a former Kansas Citian long prominent and popular in the music profession, is the talk of the Film City this week, and seems destined for much greater renown as his first book, "Jazz Cavalcade", looms as a best seller.

Orson Welles, famous liberal actor, writer and producer, contributed the foreword to the Dexter volume. "I like the book," Welles wrote, "because a square can understand it, and because it isn't for the longhaired." Apparently everyone agrees with him, for it's a sell-out and the publisher is preparing a second printing.

Just two months ago Dexter brought Julia Lee and her fly drummer, Sam (Baby) Lovett, all the way from Kansas City to Hollywood to record 12 sides for the Capitol label. The success of the first four, "Lies," "Gotta Gimme Whatcha' Got," "Julia's Blues" and "When a Woman Loves a Man,' already has been proved.

Dexter also found another Kansas Citian, Jesse Price, in Hollywood, recorded him as a singer although Price had always been known as a drummer, and now Price is clicking big at the Brass Rail Club in Glendale with his new quartet. Price's "You Satisfy" record, on Capitol, is said to have sold 119,000 copies in its first three weeks.

"Jazz Cavalcade" features, in addition to the foreword by Mr. Welles, a section of rare photographs of bands and musicians, more than 80,000 words of text, a complete bibliography of other jazz literature and an index listing the names of several thousand musicians who are discussed within the book's sixteen solid chapters.

One entire chapter is devoted to Kansas City, in the 1928-38 period, when performers like Count Basie, Andy Kirk, Pete Johnson, Joe Turner, Hot Lips Page, Ben Webster, Jay McShann, Harlan Leonard, the Walder brothers, Julia and George E. Lee and Buster Moten and dozens of other famous musicians called the Heart of America City "home."

The book is published by Criterion Music of New York's R.K.O. Building and sells at $3. It soon will be available in Kansas City, not only in book shops but also in music and record stores.

Throughout "Jazz Cavalcade" Dexter pleads for abolishment of racial discrimination. He charges the radio networks and certain motion picture studios with barring their doors to capable Negro artists. "Jazz Cavalcade" is expected to have a strong influence, an influence that already is being felt.

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa. Sat. 7-27-46

PITTSBURGHER AUTHORS HANDBOOK—Mrs. Alma A. Polk, connectional general secretary of the Young People's Department of the AME Church, has written a handbook, "Listen, Youth," for that department. The handbook is being widely acclaimed as one of the better books for leadership training, and is designed for youth leaders. Mrs. Polk, who writes the popular "Round Town" column in The Pittsburgh Courier, is also president of the Pittsburgh Conference Branch Woman's Missionary Society. She has traveled widely in the interest of her work, and is in demand as a public speaker. Mrs. Polk is already engaged on her second publication, "The Use of Art and Symbolism in the Worship of Young People."—Harris Photo.

Racial Hatred Proved a Myth in New Book by Chicago Nun

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

CHICAGO (ANP)—For three reasons, scientific, political and religious, racial hatred should be eradicated, declares Sister Mary Ellen O'Hanlon of Rosary College's biology department in a newly published booklet entitled "Racial Myth."

Insisting that "biologically considered, race discrimination and segregation are sheer nonsense," she points out that although they were factors in one of the country's worst disgraces, the Civil War, they still persist despite Constitutional amendments outlawing them.

In her book, which critics say appeals most to common sense, she asks how a man who denied certain rights and privileges to others can reconcile his conduct with the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

The MAGAZINE RACK

The Worker
By MARTHA MILLET
New York, N. Y. Sun.

ONE seldom comes across a story where a Negro domestic worker is more than a stock character, and a very minor one at that. Occasionally—though very rarely—a writer for the commercial magazines will attempt the theme from a more realistic point of view.

Such an attempt has been made by Percy Marks in **Now and Forever Just** (**Ladies Home Journal**, October). Ellen, the maid in the Sayres' household, is without doubt the major character. Mrs. Sayres' dealings with Ellen are of the most impersonal, efficient kind. Ellen's duties have been sharply defined by her employer. They do not include the care of the three children. This Mrs. Sayres considers her own duty.

But it is only because of the children that Ellen can drive herself to remain in a household where Mrs. Sayres operates with the mechanical perfection of a filing system. There was no human interchange between the two women. Mrs. Sayres was, Ellen decided after a few months, the most offensively just woman who had ever lived. 10-13-46

She permitted Ellen to stay with the children some nights, but paid her extra for the service which was outside her specified work. She never inquired about Ellen as a person, or Ellen's son who was in the army.

MEANWHILE, the children who had to tiptoe mentally in the presence of their completely efficient mother, turned to Ellen secretly for fondling and affection.

Mrs. Sayres was very active in her community, and at home she marketed, took care of the children and carried on a full social life. But she infuriated Ellen. who had once overheard and misunderstood a remark of Mrs. Sayres about servants. "How can she act as if I were a stupid machine?" Ellen kept asking herself.

One day, however, Mrs. Sayres shows her fangs in a way which surprises Ellen. The gardener has attempted to "make a pass" at Ellen. She has put him in his place in a blaze of fury. The gardener has sneered at Ellen's thinking herself "superior." Mrs. Sayres appears on the scene. She bursts out of her cool, well-ordered way to give the gardener a verbal flaying, and discharge him.

"Do you really think you're superior to Ellen because her complexion is a few shades darker than yours? Why, she's so superior to you, you aren't fit to be in the same room with her. She's decent and clean and intelligent. As for you—oh, go away. I won't have anybody like you on the place."

The next day things are as they were—still the business-like relationship. But Mrs. Sayres becomes ill, and since she cannot help it, the running of the house is taken over by Ellen. Will this episode end with just another payment for extra "services rendered?" Ellen wonders as the days pass. She wants desperately to be taken at her own level, as a mature, intelligent woman, to be with Mrs. Sayres as one woman with another.

Mrs. Sayres recovers. What she does now will prove something to Ellen. This time the break is made. It is not prejudice which keeps the veil of ice between the two women. It is Mrs. Sayres' inability to give freely of herself to anyone, even her children. For her it is a giant step to be able to send Ellen a note with flowers: "It gives me such a warm and happy feeling, Ellen, to have such a good friend in the house."

THOUGH such a story is not earth-shaking, its appearance in a widely-read magazine of this type is worth noting. For once, the Negro maid has been presented as a human being who insists on acceptance as one. The employer, who almost every other month will be having the usual "servant problem" in the slicks, is shown as a person free from prejudice, but with the flaw of being unable fully to bridge the gap between herself and other people. This is an interesting treatment, at any rate. It may plant the germ of an idea in **Ladies Home Journal** readers who are generally inundated by unmitigated pap.

About North Africa

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa.

This is a chronicle of talks with the average man and woman in a section of North Africa that the war has made familiar, the story mostly in their own words, of some of the ordinary folk of Algeria and Morocco. Sat. 8-24-46

"I landed with the question filling my mind: 'What goes on inside these people about whom we know so little?' Four months later I found myself with a new understanding of what Confucius observed, that the nature of men is generally the same; it is their habits that separate them."

Thus does Guido Rosa begin his enlightening "North Africa Speaks" (The John Day Company, $3.50).

From this book one obtains a new understanding of a remark made by the African scholar, Mbonu Ojike, in his "My Africa:" "No longer the dark continent," Africa is bright with the beacons of American airfields, the lights of growing ports and cities, the furnaces of industry, yes, and with the fires of hope for new freedoms for its peopes."

Like Eslanda Goode Robeson's "African Journey," "North Africa Speaks," would have us know that today Africa is coming into focus before the world and that the peoples of the world have to take account of the peoples of Africa.

For those reasons and others this is an outstanding book. The effective photographic work by the author is of such high calibre that it reminds one of that of Margaret Bourke-White, whose photographic work has made more than one of Erskine Caldwell's books attention-compelling. Also Guido Rosa's allowing the North Africans to tell their own stories in their own idiom makes for fascinating reading.

"North Africa Speaks" is a sort of Canterbury Tales collected by a Twentieth Century Chaucer whose keen knowledge of human behavior (also evidenced in "Mexico Speaks" is of too arresting a nature to be considered ordinary. Travelling with the author and his companion-guide, Gadi, we meet almost every type of ordinary folk of North Africa. Like other peoples, they desire to live according to their convictions; they desire to leave children to take their places when death comes; they desire to have us know that their families are their kingdoms. Their world-consciousness, their awareness of progress being made by Americans, their eagerness and willingness to discard the old and to adopt the new are indeed admirable.

Guido Rosa has given us another praiseworthy book.

J. RANDOLH FISHER
Nashville 8, Tenn.

HISTORY OF TAN GI 'Negro in World War II' TOLD IN NEW BOOK

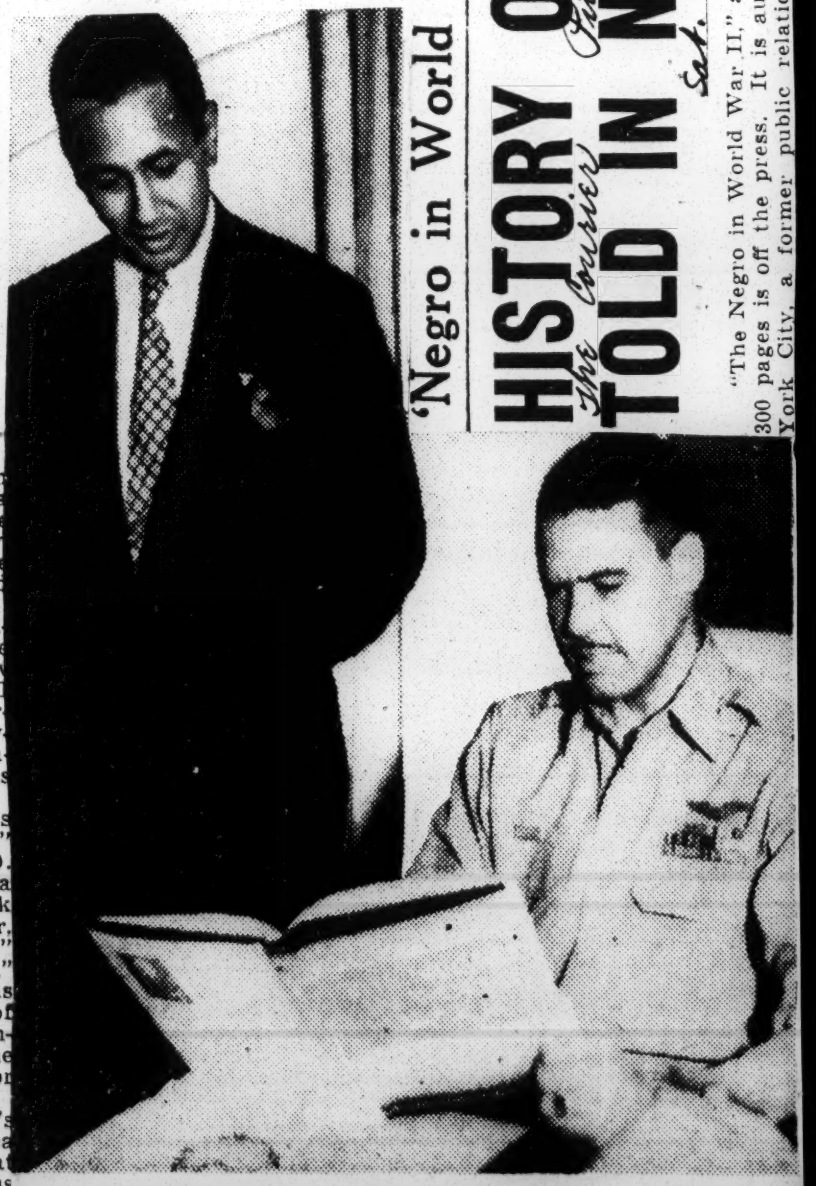
The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa. Sat. 7-27-46

"The Negro in World War II," a pictorial history of approximately 300 pages is off the press. It is authored by John D. Silvera of New York City, a former public relations officer at Godman Field, Ky. The book covers all branches of service, including civilians, and has an appendix dealing with Negroes in other wars.

In a statement last week, Silvera said his book refutes charges made by critics who attempted to ignore the role Negroes played in every phase of the war.

PRAISED BY GIBSON

Truman K. Gibson Jr., former Civilian Aide to the Secretary of War, had this to say of the book: "It is comprehensive and well done and will greatly aid in extending the knowledge of all Americans about the important contributions of Negroes in this war."



TELLS COLONEL ABOUT HIS NEW BOOK—John D. Silvera of New York, former intelligence officer and public relations officer with the 477th Composite Group at Godman Field, Ky., tells Col. B. O. Davis Jr., Lockburne Air Base commanding officer, of the book he has authored. The book is a pictorial history of "The Negro in World War II."—AAF Photo.

groes to the winning of the war against the Nazis and Fascists."

The foreward and introduction to the book has been read into the Congressional Record by Congressman Adam C. Powell Jr., and the American Council on Race Relations expressed interest in having the book widely circulated throughout the country as a part of the race relations program.

PRINTED IN SOUTH.

"The Negro Soldier in World War II" was published by Army and Navy Publishing Company, Baton Rouge, La.

The author is offering autographed copies of the book from his headquarters at 80 East 121st Street, New York 35, N. Y.

Silvera was public relations representative for Orson Welles' "Macbeth," and the Federal Theatre Project before enlisting in the Air Corps. He spent four years in the service and advanced to a first lieutenant.

Off The Book Shelf

Jack Conroy

The Defender
Chicago, Ill.

"Uncle Tom"

THE book generally credited with giving a great impetus to the anti-slavery movement in the United States also supplied a term of derogation or scorn, for nobody wants to be called an "Uncle Tom." The name brings with it a vision of bowing and scraping, of answering "yassuh! yassuh!" to the white boss man. The man used by Harriet Beecher Stowe as a prototype for her Uncle Tom was inclined to be docile and uncomplaining, but he did not die from a beating administered by Simon Legree while angelic Little Eva, let down from the overhead flies on a wire, beckoned him heavenward. This is the picture fostered by the innumerable "Tom" shows, complete with real bloodhounds and a brass band, that used to take to the road every year. Sat. 10-26-46

Josiah Henson, whose life story is told by Brion Gysin in "To Master, a Long Goodnight" (Creative Age, $3.00) was born a slave, true enough, but before his death he had acquired an international reputation as a preacher and lecturer. He and his wife had visited President and Mrs. Hayes in the White House; in England Queen Victoria had given him an audience.

Henson's early experiences as a slave followed the fictional ones of Uncle Tom pretty closely. When Josiah was six, the other members of his family were sold on the auction block. He, small fry, was thrown onto a dirt floor with 40 adult slaves who were so benumbed by their own abject position that they didn't care whether he lived or died. He did almost die, until his new owner met the slaveholder who had bought his mother and sold him at a bargain rate. Gysin gives us an idea of the daily live of the bondsmen on Riley's plantation:

"The principal food . . . was corn meal and salt herring, to which, in summer, there was added a little buttermilk from the churning, and a few vegetables which were grown in truck patches and tended after dark when the field work was done. There were two regular meals a day; breakfast at twelve, after work since dawn, and a supper when the day was over. . . . Clothing was of tow cloth, with only a shirt for the children."

Man of Resource

JOSIAH from the first proved himself to be a man of resource and ability, and his master soon found it convenient to install him as a "lead slave" charged with the responsibility of getting more work out of his fellow slaves. This system saved the wages of a white overseer, who wouldn't have accomplished as much by the lash as Josiah would by persuasion and example.

On one occasion Josiah saved his master from a severe beating at the hands of a crowd led by his brother's overseer, who later served Mrs. Stowe as a model for Simon Legree. The overseer later waylaid Henson, and with the aid of several Negro slaves, broke both his arms and flogged him half to death. Till the day of his death, Josiah was unable to raise his hands higher than his head.

Josiah's eventual escape to Canada with his wife and children was accomplished without the aid of the Underground Railroad. Once before he had had the opportunity to deliver a boatload of slaves into the free state of Ohio, but sternly rejected the idea. He later excused himself as follows:

Entrancing Ideas

"THE duties of a slave to his master, as appointed over him by the Lord, I had ever heard urged by ministers and religious men. Entrancing as the ideas were, that the coast was clear for a run for freedom, that I might liberate my companions, might carry off my wife and children and some day own a house and land and be no longer despised and abused, still my notions of right were against it. I had promised my master to take his property to Kentucky, and deposit it with his brother, Amos. Pride, too, came in to confirm me."

Gysin's biography of Josiah Henson is more than a recounting of the events of his dramatic life. It is in a sense an inquiry into the role of the Uncle Toms of today — the compromisers who often feel, or profess to feel, that yielding to the will of the more domineering in the majority group is the wisest course in the long run. Written with less heat than calm conviction, it speaks persuasively for the viewpoint it advances.

A Confederate Leader

The Courier-Journal
A Review by Tarleton Collier
Louisville, Ky. Sun. 10-6-46

ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS: By Rudolph Von Abele. 346 pp. Knopf. $4.

It was not altogether the preponderance of Union military power that doomed the Southern Confederacy. Internal conflicts among wilful men contributed to its downfall. Inexperienced and ill-equipped administrators had something to do with the end; and so did inflexibility and jealousy of principle. But the principle was not, in every case, the product of reason; rather of rationalization. There were times when it appeared a thing of impulse, defensive and not a little perverse. And no figure typified more nearly the disastrous errors of judgment, the lack of wisdom, the sensitiveness of personal pride than that of Alexander H. Stephens, vice president of the nation that was born and swiftly died in war.

Do you get somehow a feeling that the contemporary professional Southerner in Congress, opposing his party's policy in league with its enemies, is being described? It is easy to come to this conclusion in reading Mr. Von Abele's biography of the strange, tormented "Little Aleck," who was beloved to the last by his Georgia neighbors and constituents, though driven by emotional instability into political indiscretions that would have wrecked half a dozen normal careers.

He hardly knew a day's relief from illness. His impotence denied him a normal life. He was all voice, brain and flaming eyes. He was driven by his infirmities to a pathological aggressiveness. He lacked a perspective of events and destiny. He opposed secession yet accepted the second post in its government.

Stephens, the man, fairly drew affection. Though he would have furiously denied it, he was the object of a vast indulgence, political and personal. Like practically all Southerners of his day—and many Southerners of today—his philosophy of democracy was warped by his view of Negroes as being somehow less than human. Rights were not natural; they were based on and created by law. "Aristocracy, democracy, feudalism, agrarian, worship of progress—his theory of government nibbled at them all."

Book Review

The Call Kansas City, Mo.
Fri. 10-25-46

Edmund Fuller, author of "A Star Pointed North," to be published by Harper and Brothers on October 30, writes about his book:

"In the summer of 1938 a friend of mine became excited about an interesting old book, of the vintage of the seventies or eighties, that he had discovered in a second-hand bookstore. It opened up a story new to him in American history. He lent me the battered old book. It was called "The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass" written by himself.

"When I read this remarkable account of a man's rise from slavery to leadership of his people in the fight for freedom, I determined that some day I would attempt to write a novel about him. The story cried out for it.

"As tensions developed during the early war years, with race riots in Detroit, New York and elsewhere, it seemed to me more and more urgent that we prove our ability to live fairly and peaceably at home if we were ever to create a peaceful world when the war had ended. I remembered the Douglass book and my old intention to take the framework of his life and build a novel upon it. I began the long background study necessary for the job.

"At about the same time the Hillburn school segregation case occurred in Rockland County where I live. Many of us in the County organized to combat this case. Through this I was drawn into immediate association with my Negro neighbors and into the work of the NAACP in my own community of Nyack. These associations stimulated my work on the book. They strengthened my belief that learning to live harmoniously at home with all her peoples is America's first great problem. To show that we cannot learn to control ourselves on this neighborly level would be to show that we cannot hope to control ourselves in the fatal level of the atomic bomb.

"These three and a half years spent with Frederick Douglass have been one of the greatest experiences of my life. As I began the work I was amazed to see how few white Americans knew the name of Frederick Douglass. Many even had an idea that he was the man who debated with Lincoln. I hope that this book may help to make him familiar to many Americans who are just beginning to realize how many great men the Negro people have given to our country."

A NEW ZEALAND STUDY

The News
Birmingham, Ala.

WHERE THE PEOPLE SING: GREEN LAND OF THE MAORIS, by John Lee Zimmerman. Published by Alfred A. Knopf; 234 pages, $3.

Many books have been written about the South Sea Islands. Doubtless many more will be written. This one is not a run-of-the-mine travelogue. Zimmerman was sent to the Southwest Pacific as a commissioned officer with the Sixth Marines. During the Guadalcanal campaign he contracted malaria and was invalided to New Zealand, where he formed many friendships with the Maoris, learning perhaps more than any other modern writer of their culture. He noted with delight that their native chants are based on traditional German and other European themes. He was pleased to learn that the Maori men flooded the draft and that the people were not embittered when their own homeland was threatened by the Japanese while the bulk of the native manhood was fighting for Britain in North Africa. Sat. 10-5-46

Most interesting of all the points in the book is Zimmerman's study of a racial minority, a study which illuminates the American Negro problem. There are nearly 100,000 Maoris in New Zealand. They live together with the whites on terms of perfect friendship. The whites take deep pride in their Maori neighbors. Any insult to them is greatly resented. Any New Zealander whose blood is only one-sixteenth Maori claims the race as his own. Zimmerman first wondered why such a condition should exist in New Zealand and yet not seem feasible in America. On the surface the situations are parallel. As a complicating factor, the author points out that Southern Marines, who would go frantic at the idea of miscegenation with the Negro, fraternized freely with the Maori maidens. Therefore he terms the problem not merely a matter of color.

Arriving at a conclusion, Zimmerman writes that, although the Maori was overcome in a hopeless fight against the arms and skill of the white invader, the Maori knows he was never wholly conquered. On the other hand, the Negro lives and struggles under the tremendous psychological handicap of having been a slave, and, even worse, of having been a slave to the people among whom he now lives. With the Maori there is a complete lack of self-consciousness, in contrast to the obtrusive and almost painful self-consciousness of the Negro in all activities which require contact with the whites. Where the Maori knows he is respected by whites, the Negro seems to think he must make a definite and sometimes extraordinary effort to place himself outside his essential "Negro-ness."

This book reveals a surprising degree of Maori culture. Their music, architecture, handicraft, education and morals are on a very high plane. Towards illegitimate children they feel they should demonstrate extra love and understanding because of the stigma of their birth. He relates an amusing incident that happened during the war with the British. A Maori chief captured a group of enemy soldiers, emaciated from the ordeal of battle in the wastelands. With dignity, the chief fed them and released them, saying they should fatten themselves and return for battle under better conditions. Such is the quality of the Maoris.—CHARLES WHITE McGEHEE.

1946

BOOK Notes
BY GERTRUDE SCOTT MARTIN

The Chronicle Detroit Mich

"CROSS ON THE MOON"

Most novels about the South seem to fall into certain fairly set patterns. Among these are the "Tobacco Road type, the moonlight and magnolias type, and those which are concerned with Southern religion. "Cross On The Moon" falls in the latter category.

Johnny Beane is a young Georgia boy steeped in fundamentalist religion and, as he grows older, torn between its teachings and fears and the knowledge he finds in the books he reads in secret. His life is a succession of cruel beatings at the hands of his father who quotes the Bible as he wields the whip. Sat. 10-19-46

Only two friends stand between Johnny and the combined scorn and lack of understanding of his family. One is Aunt Duty, the 70-year-old Negro woman whom his mother pays $5 weekly as maid of all work; the other is Dr. Smith, Leafy Grove's most vocal atheist.

Above the average in conception, "Cross On The Moon" falls short of the excellence it might have reached. Mr. Hewlett's writing is often vivid, but his use of dialect is overdone. Since a large part of the book is conversation, this minor fault looms larger than it might otherwise seem. The pace of the book varies also, at times it moves along swiftly and surely; at others it seems to drag.

The author has attempted to include too much for his space: a lynching, a seduction scene, a religious revival, Dr. Smith's long dream of the coming of Jesus to Leafy Grove. The dream is a grimly amusing commentary on the South and might have appeared to better advantage if the book were less crammed with other happenings. Jesus in Leafy Grove treating everyone alike, taking Aunt Duty to the drug store for a Coca-Cola, urging better schools for the children, opposing gossiping and tale-bearing was no great success. When Jesus ran for mayor of Leafy Grove the campaign slogan used against him was:

You Don't Want A Jew For Mayor, Do YOU?

The Negro characters of whom Mr. Hewlett writes fall into the usual stereotypes, the "white man's nigger" as he calls Punky, the seductive Negro girls, the mulatto daughter of a prostitute and a white man, etc. Although Aunt Duty is treated sympathetically she is the traditional mammy type who can see no wrong in the good white folks and dislikes many Negroes.

"Cross On The Moon" for all its faults is worth reading. Its author has a gift for satire and character portrayal and he looks upon his fellow Southerners with no illusions. Mr. Hewlett is a Georgian.

"Cross On The Moon," by John Hewlett; Whittlesey House; New York 18, 1946; $2.75.

BOOK Notes
BY GERTRUDE SCOTT MARTIN

Michigan Chronicle

A VOLUNTEER'S ADVENTURES

John William De Forest the author of "A Volunteer's Adventure" is one of those unsung literary figures in American history whose work will long remain a rich treasure for the discriminating reader. He was a Union captain in the Civil War and the picture he draws of that conflict in this book of simple and intimate letters cannot fail to impress us. Chronicle

Some people think in terms of black or white and have no appreciation for the colors in between. DeForest was not so afflicted and his careful observations on both union and the rebel side of the Civil War are refreshingly different and illuminating. Sat 7-6-46

What we liked most about the book is the close-up descriptions the author gives of his war experience in the Louisiana delta country. After leaving Ship Island for New Orleans, De Forest wrote on May 2, 1862: "Between Fort Jackson and Chalmette, a few miles below New Orleans, we saw hardly fifty white people on the banks, and the houses had the look of having been closed and abandoned. Even the Negroes were far from being as numerous as we had expected. None of the whites signalled to us, or took any other notice of us, or seemed to see us. One elderly man, driving northward with a rockaway full of women, kept along with us for a quarter of a mile or so, without once turning his white-bearded face toward us. Sat 7-6-46

"The blacks, as might be expected, were more communicative and more friendly. They gathered to stare at us, and when there were no whites near, they have enthusiastic evidence of good will, dancing at us, waving hats or branches and shouting welcome."

The series of letters which make up "A Volunteer's Adventures" have been given a continuity and unity which make them as readable as a novel. The simple language, the sensitive eye, and the subtle humor revealed in these letters De Forest wrote to his wife should appeal to the general reader as well as the student interested in the Civil War period. Chronicle

The book was edited by James H. Croushore and has an introduction by Stanley T. Williams. Detroit Mich

"A Volunteer's Adventures" by John William De Forest, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1946, $3.00.

Of Southern Morality

The Book Review New York, N.Y.

NIGHT FIRE. By Edward Kimbrough. 343 pp. New York: Rinehart & Co. $2.75.

By NASH K. BURGER

Sun. 10-6-46

EDWARD KIMBROUGH, whose first book, "From Hell to Breakfast," did a rather thorough job of showing what makes a Southern demagogic Senator tick, has written in "Night Fire" a stronger, more ambitious novel about a self-questioning young Mississippian of a planter family and how he finds himself. **Ashby Pelham was haunted by memories and evidences of an older South which he was unable either to accept or to reject. Always he was aware of "unanswered questions and legions of old remembrances."**

His redemption begins when he undertakes to protect one of the Negroes on his father's plantation from a frustrated Sheriff seeking a scapegoat. It is noteworthy that Ashby at first is not so much concerned about the welfare of the Negro, Temp, as with the fact that he doesn't like the poor-white Sheriff. The gesture, too, is rooted in the traditions of the older South, the noblesse oblige of the white man protecting his own Negroes.

By the story's end, after an exciting cops-and-robbers chase of several days, climaxed by an all-out, mob lynching attempt, Ashby comes to an appreciation of Temp as an individual and a new and truer conception of race relations. He discovers, too, that in the South the past cannot be ignored, it must be understood, accepted, and used. He grows, in spite of himself, into the image of that earlier, heroic Ashby Pelham whose memory he has tried to escape.

ALONG with keeping Ashby half a jump ahead of the Sheriff, Mr. Kimbrough works in a first-class love affair and some vignettes of Mississippi life that are unusual and illuminating—and some that are downright scandalous, though very funny. As a matter of fact, the emphasis on Southern habits and the Southern way of life is as important in the novel as the emphasis on that particular aspect represented by the Negro Temp. With Temp safely hidden for the moment, the story ignores him, and Mr. Kimbrough, through the mind of Ashby and through Ashby's relations with his family, the girl, Laurel, and others, ranges over matters of Southern morality and Southern politics, of manners and attitudes, of life on the land and life in the cotton mills of the New South. But inevitably Sheriff Littlepage turns up and the chase is on again. Mr. Kimbrough maintains a nice balance between physical action, love in bloom, and social analysis.

The style is rich, rhythmic, sentimental. Much of the story is told in flashback, sometimes rather lengthy flashbacks intruding into the narrative at crucial times. But there is power in the sustained intensity of Ashby's seeking, in the lushness of the writing, the thick bouillabaisse of violence, wild humor, sentiment and emotional extravagance. It is a manner appropriate to the subject and the setting. "Let us talk of our ills," says Miss Semantha, Ashby's aunt, "let us talk of our deaths and defeats, and give us time enough for oratory, and though we'll not forget, we'll heal the rawness of our remembering with words."

Edward Kimbrough.

Book Reviews

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md

by J. Saunders Redding

Sat. 10-26-46

RHYMES OF THE TIMES, by J. Farley Ragland, Foreword by Arthur Paul Davis, Wendell Malliet and Co., 110 p., $2.)

'Black people—a happy folk of
healthful word and sign,
With wit and wisdom, and willingness to do;
I'm mighty proud to call My People mine,
Happy in the knowledge that I'm a Black man, too"

And, indeed, J. Farley Ragland, author of "Rhymes of the Times," seems to be quite happy; even perhaps a little too happy, considering that there really isn't much to be particularly happy about.

But then, as the white folks have pointed out for two hundred years, being very happy about very little is the colored man's special God-given faculty and his contribution to the total American character.

If they were less happy it may be that we would not have Mantan Moreland's hilarious mugging on the vaudeville stage, Butter Beans and Susie's convulsive antics, and such a character as Daddy Grace, who, I daresay, is even now thinking of something stupendous, some new crinkle in the baptismal ceremony perhaps, to bring joy to the hearts of his followers.

Too Refreshing

Perhaps, too, we would not have had "Rhymes of the Times," and this, all things considered, would have been a loss.

As Arthur P. Davis says in a foreword to this volume: "In an era when poetry has become so intellectual and metaphysical that one has to have a half-page of commentary or explication for every page of verse, it is refreshing to find someone writing in a simple manner about the simple thoughts of the average man."

And "refreshing" is the word, like water from a well—of which, incidentally, you can get too much.

If criticism is called for, the thing I would charge against Mr. Ragland is that he gives us too much in this one volume and he is not always discriminating enough.

All Not His Best

You get the impression that, for one reason or another, he did not cull his storehouse of rhymes and present us only his best.

This makes for unevenness, for repetition, and for a cluttering-up of the reader's sensibilities. I hope he will avoid this in the future. I hope he will give us only the very best that he can do, like:

"Some day you'll pay for all this—
These tears that fill my eyes,
This tender yearning for a kiss,
This gloomy surge of sighs.
Some day you'll pay for all this—
With searing grief and pain;
Some day you'll miss my fervid kiss,
That tell me I remember still
The things that you forgot!
And want my arms again!"
Or the final lines of "A Plea for Equity."

"This is America the free—
The Land of Freedom's morning,
But there must be for folks like me
A fuller freedom dawning!"

Your absence cannot wholly kill
The whispers in my heart. 10-26-46

Little Black Sambo Still Liked

The Courier-Journal
Louisville, Ky.
Sun. 11-24-46

By the British Information Services

NEW YORK, Nov. 23.—A mother sat in a deck chair on a liner sailing for India and thought unhappily of her two children, whom she would not see for several years. She had left them in an English school because of the Indian climate.

Out of her loneliness she began to write a story for them, a nursery tale that would bridge the miles and the years. Little did she imagine that she was beginning a book that would entrance the children of many nations for half a century.

The story of "Little Black Sambo" is almost a legend. The book has never been out of print.

Little Black Sambo is on his own now. Mrs. Helen Bannerman, the shy, pleasant Scotswoman who created him, has died.

Behind the strange adventures of the little Indian boy lies a far more human story.

Mrs. Bannerman, the daughter of Dr. Robert Watson, traveled all over the British Commonwealth with her father. After visiting many parts of Europe, she returned to Scotland and in 1889 was married to Maj. William Bannerman.

They went to live in India, where their four children were born. Exactly 10 years after she was married, Mrs. Bannerman took her two eldest children over to England to put them in school. During the long journey back to India, Mrs. Bannerman tried to think of some way to ease her unhappiness. That was when Sambo popped into her mind. She jotted down the story as it came to her, sketching pictures of the little boy to illustrate his adventures.

Had it not been for a persistent friend of the family, Sambo might have ended up in the wastebasket. But the next year Sambo appeared as a book in England. It was an immediate success. During the next 10 years, Mrs. Bannerman wrote and illustrated five more juvenile books: "Little Black Quibba"; "Little Black Quasha"; "Little Black Mingo"; "The Story of the Teasing Monkey," and "Little Black Bobtail."

Sambo crossed the Atlantic to America in 1900. A member of the Frederick A. Stokes publishing houses visiting England obtained the American rights to the book and brought it to the United States.

A Cabin in the Cotton

The Times Book Review
New York, N.Y.

SEND ME AN ANGEL. By Alice Nisbet. 122 pp. Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press. $2.

Dusky character created over 50 years ago by lonely Scotch mother to be on own now

Shirley Graham Writes New Work On Robeson

The Defender Chicago, Ill.
Sat. 7-20-46

NEW YORK — A number of writers this week honored the appearance of Shirley Graham's new book, "Paul Robeson: Citizen of the World."

W. E. B. DuBois, Carl VanVechten, Dr. Warren Brown of New York University, J .A. Rogers Bucklin Moon, Dr. L. D. Reddick Elmer Wendell Dean and others gathered in the library of the National Memorial Bookstore in Harlem at the invitation of its proprietor, Lewis Micheaux, and congratulated Miss Graham for her latest achievement.

Miss Graham's publisher, Julian Messner, also was present. Messner is currently offering a $6.000 award for the best book to further interracial good will.

Miss Graham addressed a group of young people attending the Encampment for Citizenship at Riverdale. She told the gathering of Negro, white and Japanese-American students, brought to the party by Dr. Reddick that she hoped her story of Paul Robeson would be an inspiration to young people in the way that Robeson has already inspired confidence in a broad adult field. She told them that, as young people, they carried the hope of the future and that it was incumbent upon them to learn the meaning of democracy for all.

Lewis Micheaux addressed the

SHIRLEY GRAHAM

group briefly saying that with the return of Bilbo to the Senate it was clear that Hitlerism was still alive. He added that literature of the Negro people such as Miss Graham was writing was ammunition in the fight against racism.

Miss Graham, who is also the author of "George Washington Carver: Scientist," revealed that she has already delivered to her publisher a biography of Frederick Douglass.

Rogers, Dr. Reddick and Dean also congratulated Miss Graham. The author autographed a number of copies of her book.

Forceful Exposure of Fascism in the South

The Worker New York, N.Y.
Sun. 12-1-46

"SOUTHERN EXPOSURE," by Stetson Kennedy, Doubleday and Company, 372 p. $3.

Here is the kind of book that not only will win cheers from the casual reader but also will win the undying gratitude of writers, lecturers, students and others who may need a handy reference on the South.

In **Southern Exposure** Stetson Kennedy has documented his expose of the anti-democratic forces in the South with photographs, quotations and statistics gleaned from hundreds of sources.

'Gold Mine Of Facts'

He has combed reports of congressional committees, special committees, college researchers and government bureaus. He collected letters, and other documents from the Ku Klux Klan as well as "small fry" subversive organizations.

A southerner himself, Kennedy joined many of these organizations, attended their meetings and talked with their leaders.

His book is a gold mine of source material.

And it is much more than that. Kennedy frames his expose in a terse and meaty description of the Dixie scene, a brief glance at pertinent history of the area and an analysis of the program and potentials of the progressive and liberal and labor organizations active in the region today.

Kennedy combines scholarship and a nice skill with words. You can get the feel of this talent from some of his chapter heads: "Grits Without Gravy . . . Lethal Statistics . . . Freedom Road—Closed . . . Plutocracy of Politaxia . . . Whose Good Earth? . . . The Race Racket . . . The Southern Revolt. . . ." M. R.

"Race and Nation In The United States" by E. A. Benians; Cambridge University Press. The Macmillian Company; New York City, 1946; $.75.

and social rights was declared unconstitutional. The transition the book has much merit. Mr. Benians has made a good presslowed down." Certainly the period which followed in the South is one that found more than an "adaption to the American Constitution to the circumstances of the nation." Up to the present the South has **OPPOSED** the constitutional rights of Negroes.

A clear writer, Mr. Benians is a lecture delivered to students of Bedford College at Cambridge. It is by the author who is master of St. John's College, Cambridge. It is a brief but inclusive account of the "inception and growth of the idea of an American Nation." 7-13-46

BOOK Notes

BY GERTRUDE SCOTT MARTIN

Amanda

"BRIGHT APRIL"

Few juvenile books which touch on the race problem are successful in handling it satisfactorily. One notable exception is "Bright April" by Marguerite de Angeli. Designed for young readers it is the sort of book which youngsters will want to read and re-read.

It is the story of April Bright, almost ten, who lives in Philadelphia and is a member of a Brownie troop. Since April is a Negro she is faced several times in the course of the story with rudeness on the part of some of the white girls. When April asks her mother: "Why must we be different? I don't feel different." Her mother answers, "You aren't different, really, except in the way one flower differs from another." After showing April some of the different flowers which make the garden beautiful, Mrs. Bright told her that you are going to learn how to do what you want to do so well you will find a place for yourself wherever you want to go. And you must be so pleasant a person that you will make friends wherever you go. "Bright April" is a thoroughly charming book and few readers will be able to resist April and Brownie friends.

Although far from the age group for whom the book was written Miss de Angeli and are excellent. The format of the book is also very attractive; in other words "Bright April" passes muster in every way.

"Bright April" by Marguerite de Angeli; Doubleday and Company, Inc.; New York City; 1946; $2.50.

A NATION'S BEGINNING

Writing of the Reconstruction Miss found myself delighted with it. but the whole idea of an hope it will be as widely read as and with Union victory the deserves to be. ciple of democracy survived." The illustrations are also Reconstruction makes a statement of the book was written Negro alone which was en to question: the South has om enshrined in the constitutional rights of Negroes. which has rt. Mr. Penians can Constitution es of the nation. from an intolble haste. Less- 46 pages. Except for his analysis the Negro civil of the Reconstruction and the use

9 1946

Books of the Times

New York Times

4-17-46

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

IN September, 1923, Dabney Fairchild, who was only 17, was going to be married beneath her. Troy Flavin, the overseer of the Fairchild plantation of Shellmound, came from the hill country up near the Tennessee line and was no fit husband for a Delta beauty and a Fairchild at that. But, although Dabney's father, Battle Fairchild, grieved and her great-aunts also, nobody else seemed to mind much. It wasn't as if Dabney was going to leave the Delta. Dabney's seven brothers and sisters, her cousins and uncles and aunts were all more concerned with the excitement of the wedding preparations, with the constant interest of their own affairs and the constant bustle and stir and sense of shared experience that made the Fairchild family such a closed circle peculiar to itself.

Eudora Welty

For a week before the wedding 9-year-old Laura, the motherless cousin who was only a Fairchild on her mother's side, lived in a state of suspended animation, almost as if she were holding her breath, during those hot still days when all life itself seemed strange and portentous with unsuspected significance, with meanings as clear and yet as untouchable as reflections in the water at the bottom of a well. Readers of Eudora Welty's novel about the Fairchilds, "Delta Wedding,"* may feel that way, too, as if they were seeing things through a magic telescope, or down a well. The view is luminously bright, but it is distant and unreal.

Author's First Full-Length Novel

Eudora Welty is one of the most gifted of the younger generation of Southern writers. The short stories published in her first book, "A Curtain of Green," with their cruel humor, their grim irony and their distinctive prose, were memorable and distinguished work. But since then, in her novelette, "The Robber Bridegroom," and in a second volume of short stories, "The Wide Net," Miss Welty seems to have been drifting into curious backwaters of fiction, dangerous eddies where a writer may drown in private experiments with form and cryptic, elusive vaguities of style too tenuous for clear communication. "Delta Wedding" is Miss Welty's first full-length novel. It is by no means as plain as the nose on your face, but it is a welcome return out of the Mississippi night into what is, if not high noon, at least twilight.

This is a novel about life in the deep South at a time when neither wars nor depressions distracted its characters from the more important business of their personal lives. It is a study of the manners, the habits of thought, and the way of life of an aristocratic family. The Fairchilds were not just prosperous planters with many Negro dependents and more than the customary number of kissing kin. They were more intense, more joyful and eager, more zestful in living and more mutually devoted than anyone else. Something about them made trivial matters important, casual pleasures bewitching. No wonder little Laura wanted so desperately to be one of them, not just a guest.

At first it is difficult to pick your way among all the Fairchilds. Uncle Battle and Aunt Ellen had eight children, from 18-year-old Shelley to Bluett, the baby. Then there were two great-aunts, two old-maid aunts, one married aunt and her husband, and one married uncle and his wife. No sooner are you accustomed to looking at them through Laura's eyes than the focus must be adjusted. It is through Shelley's thoughtful mind, or Dabney's self-absorbed one or Ellen's kindly and sympathetic one that the others are seen. But yet, in spite of the shifting points of view, "Delta Wedding" is unified by Miss Welty's own personality, as if her characters were different aspects of her own subtle, observant, retentive mind.

4-17-46

Like Pieces of a Puzzle

All this is described in a smooth, intricate and liquid prose that laps gently against the edge of your attention. Relax for a moment and the words blur into meaninglessness. But if you sit up and take notice, pay alert attention and concentrate, the complex design can be seen. Like pieces of a puzzle, various elements of the larger picture fit into place: the hot cotton country on the banks of the Yazoo; the importance of ancestors and relatives and the past; horses, servants, food; social codes that rest so lightly upon accustomed shoulders their weight is not oppressive; the matriarchal power of the female Fairchilds; the special privileged position of the Fairchilds that seems so natural that no one thinks twice about it. That is, no one save Troy, who is marrying into the family, and Aunt Robbie, who married Uncle George and knew that the Fairchilds never accepted her.

Nothing much happens in "Delta Wedding." There is no dramatic conflict, much less a plot. The only result of all Miss Welty's lovely words is that you learn to know all the Fairchilds intimately and to place them against the background of their own scheme of living. They are not as uniform as they at first seem. Uncle George, the most kind and beloved, is also the proudest. Uncle Battle is charming but always superficial, Aunt Ellen charming with unexpected depths.

New York, N.Y.

But somehow "Delta Wedding," in spite of its impressive skill, is disappointing and somewhat dull. Miss Welty writes as if she were on the verge of important revelations, of significant and surprising truths. But the receptive and willing reader will look for them in vain. This is a true picture of believable people, timeless and impressionistic, but it seems pallid, over-refined, painted for admirers of a particular school of esthetics, not for the general public.

S. I. Hayakawa

Second Thoughts

From Pirates' Hide-out to Slum Village

THE FOLLOWING paragraphs are quoted from "The Jamaican Co-operator," a mimeographed newsletter written and distributed by the Reverend John Peter Sullivan, S.J., of St. George's College Extension School, Kingston, Jamaica, British West Indies:

"Remember old Douglas Fairbanks and his duelling pictures? Then there was 'Captain Blood' from Sabatini and 'Mutiny on the Bounty' and the whole cycle of Hollywood productions featuring the swashbuckling buccaneers who once upon a time were the scourge of the Spanish Main. Well, the bucs had a hideout here in the West Indies where they could slip in, pull down the Jolly Roger and over a keg of hot buttered rum count their pieces of eight.

"That hideout was Port Royal, a tiny village today of about 800 souls sprawling out on a thin flat peninsula of land a few miles offshore from the Kingston harbor wharves. Gone are the pirates of old from Port Royal and instead. . . . But let me unwind the yarn for a moment of the modern Port Royal.

5-25-46

"Port Royal was officially condemned, so it is said, in 1938 as being unfit for human habitation what with the desperate state of housing, sanitation, unemployment, malnutrition, and so on. You would have to see the spot to appreciate what an appalling wreck it is.

"The population of the little village is about 800. There are about 300 children. Of the 500 adults, approximately 100 have jobs and that not every week. Average salary of those lucky enough to have occasional employment is about $6 a week. Appeals to politics, government subsidy, charity, failed.

Co-op Study Club

"FATHER Charles L. Judah, S.J., gathered a few men together one Sunday morning after mass, spun them the saga of the co-ops in Little Dover way down east in Nova Scotia. By way of a follow-up a young man of about 24 years of age, Ashton Bailey, top-flight co-op organizer if ever there was one, pushed off in a canoe Sunday after Sunday and rowed out to Port Royal offshore.

"Weekly for about a year Mr. Bailey put the Port Royal Co-op pioneers through a stiff study club course on the subject of the Co-op Credit Union. In April of 1943 there were 10 members and about $1.50 in share capital.

"The other night I listened in on the Port Royal Credit Union, Ltd., annual meeting. Membership now stood at 208 and the total savings at slightly under $6,000 — a really amazing figure for anywhere in Jamaica, to say nothing of the super-depressed village of Port Royal. Every one of the 208 members had to go through the mill of **at least eight weeks' study clubbing on credit union technique** before his application for admittance was even **considered.** Imagine trying to enforce this in American credit unions!

"A marketing co-op for the Port Royal fishermen is now started. Co-op buying is being explored at the Jesuit Extension School Co-op Department. And the other night, believe it or no, I sat in with the credit union officers and for hours do you know what we, especially they, talked about?

5-25-46

What Common Man Can Do

"THEY TALKED about **Co-op Housing.** Government, politics, charity, speeches, resolutions, all had failed to dig Port Royal out of the rut. And Port Royal is not out of the woods yet, not by a long shot. But self-help has started, is now rolling, and cannot be stopped. To me the saga of Port Royal, if it perseveres, is almost miraculous. . . . An astounding proof of what the common man, despite overwhelming odds, can do when he gives the co-op way an all-out try."

And why, the reader may ask, does a priest work so hard on co-ops? Doesn't it mean a sacrifice for his church? Father Sullivan gives the answer in a later issue of his newsletter:

"The young missionary is face to face with an appalling situation. He soon learns from sobering experience that while his job is to assist people to get to heaven, he has to get them through earth first. Summarily, he must somehow reinforce the sacramental with the economic. That means organizing co-ops out on the road. It means we stand on a fish box right down on the beach with the tide and the freshly-caught fish and the fishermen around us. It means we speak, using an empty crate as a rostrum. . . .

It seems to me more of our Southside preachers ought to learn something about this "reinforcing the sacramental with the economic."

A Catholic Liberal Erects Roadblocks to Unity

Daily Worker. New York, N.Y. June

A CATHOLIC LOOKS AT THE WORLD. By Francis E. McMahon, Vanguard, $2.75.
Reviewed by STEPHEN PEABODY

Dr. McMahon, who is a philosopher on the faculty of the University of Chicago and a columnist for the **New York Post**, here takes occasion to present a systematic account of his social, political and economic views as a Catholic. What he has to say is interesting and significant, for he is representative of a growing body of opinion within the Catholic circles.

The policies Dr. McMahon appears to advocate come within the broad scope of progressivism. H is opposed to the fascism of Hitler and Mussolini and to the Franco regime in Spain. He seems to be well aware that Big Business underlies the organization of the fascist state, as it does the capitalist. He recognizes the miserable lot of the mass of workers in our society, and some of his most trenchant paragraphs inveigh against social and economic injustice. Dr. McMahon does not hesitate to justify Labor's right to organize and its historic struggle for higher wages and better working conditions. He is, moreover, an ardent defender of minority rights, especially those of the Jew and the Negro.

Reactionaries within the Catholic Church come in for some of Dr. McMahon's most severe rebukes. They have, he declares, neglected the social doctrines of their church on the rights of Labor, on racism, on international cooperation, and on a score of other issues, with the result that true Catholicism has been perverted. One example of this, Dr. McMahon says, is Franco Spain which is mistakenly presented by conservative Catholics as a religious issue, whereas it is actually a civil political matter in which Catholics can oppose Franco with good conscience. At the same time, he strangely insists on repeatedly, as if they were true, the Franco propaganda about Loyalists' "slaughter" of priests and nuns. June 4-16-46

Unfortunately Dr. McMahon, for all his good instincts, stubs his toe on the question of Communism, and he stubs it so badly that he practically destroys the logical structure of his own progressivism. For all his strictures against reaction, Dr. McMahon appears to have swallowed without so much as a gulp all of the reactionary myths about Communism. He recognizes the tyranny of fascism, which he sums up as totalitarian control and subversion of man's soul, and then he imputes similar characteristics to the Soviet state because of its class nature. He is forced to admit, however, the major contributions of the Soviet Union in the war against Hitlerism, contributions which he accepts as helping to "put out the fire" of fascism.

Actually Dr. McMahon aligns himself pretty closely with the politics of the Vatican in his sneers against the Soviet Union.

Because the Soviet Union has abolished the minority ownership of the industries he writes (p. 253) it "lacks the first essentials of democratic life." Freedom of religious worship and respect for family life are branded as "techniques of the policy of power." He advises the United States (p. 254) that there are limits to "concessions" to the Soviet Union. "We will win the respect of Russia," he writes, "by a firm but friendly approach. Power is still the dominant force in the world, and it will be power in the hands of the politically prudent that will best insure . . . the peace and well-being of the world in the immediate future." June 4-16-46

It is obvious that Dr. McMahon is haunted by the spectre of Communism, although a more self-critical examination might well demonstrate that he is being cruelly deceived, and that by perpetuating the deception he is harming the progressive causes he appears to champion.

One of the sources of Dr. McMahon's errors is his assignment of a dominant political role to Catholicism in modern society. In this he again takes the traditional Vatican view that the Roman church's mission of personal salvation gives it the right to prescribe for the political well-being of its membership and the society in which they live.

Communists are the most tolerant people in the world of religious belief. Communist philosophy rejects the existence of a supernatural world or a supernatural power. But Communists respect the right of their fellow-workers to their beliefs to the point of helping protect them from anti-Cathlic, anti-Protestant, or anti-Jewish bigots. Communists carry their toleration into practice, a point which Dr. McMahon can document time out of mind. June 4-16-46

Communists and Catholics can and do cooperate, because Communists fight for the economic welfare of the working class to which most Catholics belong, and because Communists are also staunch defenders of Catholics' right to religious faith. It is more necessary now than ever before to build this fraternal cooperation, not to erect roadblocks as Dr. McMahon does to mutual understanding.

Shirley Graham has completed and had published the second of her biographies of notables. The first was about George Washington Carver. The second, published by Julius Messner, Inc., New York, tells the story to date of Paul Robeson whom Miss Graham rushed from Paris to London some years ago, just to see. I think the book is "must" reading for Negro youth, always in need of proof that true merit has a soaring place. The author discovers Robeson for us in his humble beginnings, tells of his family background, of his early hopes and aspirations, of grammar school, high school, college, then the high-road to fame, an artist with mind and HEART.

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa. Sat. 1-10-46

I think Miss Graham has written a source book of inspiration. that she has written a long and truthful tribute to Robeson. I also think there is something lacking. She has made Paul too perfect, too infallible. She has not made him too human. Her story has a certain artificiality and a certain superficiality. They are not damning defects. They are defects which should warn Miss Graham that if she intends to continue this kind of writing, she must give her subjects more substance; her readers, more and deeper understanding of them. Biography is more than dates and achievements. It is interpretation in terms of the experiences we all share.

Haitians write another novel

The Tribune Los Angeles, Calif.

NEW YORK — "The Beast of the Haitian Hills" is what Haitian authors Philippe Thoby-Marcelin and Pierre Marcelin call their second book, to be published by Rinehart come November. Sat. 10-5-46

The Marcelin's first book, "Canape-Vert", was examined at length by U. S. critics for its excursions into voodoo. The publishers claim "The Beast" to be an improvement over "Canape-Vert", retaining "all the earlier charm" and including "strong and frequently terrifying . . . violence" as it recounts the story of a non-superstitious city man who violates the precincts of the native gods.

A Negro Evaluates Life in the United States

Gene—Richmond Times Dispatch Richmond, Va.

Opinions on Several Problems and Controversial Issues

A NEGRO'S FAITH IN AMERICA, by Spencer Logan. New York: The Macmillan Co. 88 pp. $1.75.

Reviewed by
Paul D. Williams
President Southern Regional Council

Sunday 6-23-46

IN ADDITION to his profession of enduring faith in America and his belief that her people will "come to an understanding of one another," Sergeant Logan gives his "personal opinion" on several problems and controversial issues in the interaction between the races in the United States.

He does not think that the Negro people have "developed a man or group of men who can lead them and speak for them in the postwar era." According to him, present Negro leaders are (1) "interpretive artists" who have mistaken the recognition received for their creative talent as a call to represent their people in all areas of living. Their major objective, however, seems to be to escape from racial identity rather than "the building of a strong Negro society." They are "not of the people." A wide "spiritual gulf" exists between them and the masses; (2) "intellectual idealists" who are too often "theorists and agitators" and unable to provide means for establishing working relations with white people on a common front in defense of democracy, nor have they found within themselves a chord responsive to the hearts of the Negro people; (3) "pseudo spiritual" leaders who gain the confidence of their followers and then abandon them for the lure of social and economic propaganda. They ignore the advances made in the democratic way and attempt to "create in a day a world of justice and fair play" by means of resort under the chapter title "The Harlems of America." A reorganization of our national economic system is the only solution offered.

Richmond Va.

As portents of hope the author lists and describes educational projects at Springfield, Mass., known popularly as the "Springfield plan," two New York Public "we cannot afford to wait until all white people are prepared for democracy before granting it to the Negro." 6-23-46

Interesting sidelights on the Negro soldier are given from Sergeant Logan's own experience in the European and Pacific theaters of war. The returning vet will want first of all a good job, better housing, further education, and the opportunity to live a daily life so that all these things will become so sacred to him he will be willing to fight again until death if necessary, in order to preserve them.

The Negro's loyalty to America: his consciousness of belonging to America; his patience, tolerance and faith in America are traditional in spite of the fact that he has had but "few benefits from American democracy, and these often at a high cost." Richmond Va.

This volume was selected by the Macmillan Company for the first prize in nonfiction by American citizens serving in the armed forces of the United Nations or of the United States. The author went through the public schools in the same class with white pupils in a New Jersey city and achieved some distinction in high school extra-curricular activities. He speaks of the poise and common sense of his grandfather who influenced greatly the thinking of his early years. His college education at Rutgers was interrupted because of lack of funds.

His atttitude is positive, patient, and hopeful. The life of a soldier in World War II did not embitter him. He singles out Camp Lee for developing through interracial activities mutual understanding and respect.

The book is of particular value in that it is the frank evaluation of Negro life in America by an average Negro citizen whose vision and hope for a better America remains steadfast. His faith is unshaken in the American people to achieve unity and justice in spite of outworn traditions and the lethargy of so many "so-called" respectable people. A key statement of Sergeant Logan's hopeful philosophy occurs early in the volume (page 10-11): 6-23-46

"The belief of the Negro in America is a great challenge to America. It is a test of how much or how little faith we in America has in democracy. America has in democracy is not a challenge that can be met by a [illegible] or the passage of a [illegible] of unenforceable laws. It is a challenge to each American which can be answered by a new conception of Negro and white relationship. The solution must find its ultimate ex-

Writings of "rebel" against discrimination to be published

Tribune Los Angeles, Calif.

NEW YORK — "A southerner looks at Negro discrimination" is the title of a group of selections from the writings of George W. Cable, to be published as a booklet Dec. 2 by International Publishers. A writer whose Creole tales were one of the literary highlights of his generation, Cable served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War but later came to condemn every kind of Negro discrimination as an injustice which was harming the South as a whole. To carry forward his militant fight for progress in the South, he wrote several books and a number of articles, and it is largely from these that the present selections were made. Editor of the booklet is Isabel Cable Manes, the writer's granddaughter. Sat. 11-30-46

Current reading

BLACK GIRL FROM NORTH DAKOTA

AMERICAN DAUGHTER. By ERA BELL THOMPSON. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1946. 301 Pages. $3.00.

Los Angeles Tribune, Calif. Sat 5-11-46

Reviewed by Minnie Lomax

About a decade ago Richard Wright gave eloquent and damaging testimony against the ways of the American white man as regards his scurrilous treatment of the Negro in his best seller "Native Son". Last year, on a more personal note, he incriminated the white man further, in his autobiography, "Black Boy". The two books are the literary highwater marks of a carload of denunciations of the undemocratic ways of the leading democracy of the world. Since "Native Son" there has been a never-ending, ever-growing phalanx of literary champions of the Negro's cause; and wherever the subject has been touched upon lately, and it gets a daily going-over, Wright's influence is patent. However, once in a while contradictory, or at least confusing, evidence is injected into the case by a Negro who has lived a softer, sweeter life, usually far away from the centers of hostile social arrangement. Miss Era Bell Thompson, of North Dakota, where Negroes are four percent of the population and are not run across for days on end, tells a story, "American Daughter", which, if it doesn't actually confute with the Wright school's argument, is quite an opposite of "Native Son", "Black Boy", etc.; and which should resolve the tattered old debate of city life vs. the farm as far as the Negro is concerned.

Only girl in a family of four children, she first saw the light of day in Des Moines, Iowa, where her Virginia-born father, a cook by trade, had settled as proprietor of a thriving restaurant. Pop, as Miss Thompson calls him, relieved the monotony of cooking with an occasional excursion into politics, which netted him the privilege of kissing Negro babies and a sinecure as cloakroom attendant in the senate. "Ever restless, always venturesome", and goaded by the incorrigibleness of his three sons, Pop finally succumbed to the exhortations of his brother John who wrote glowingly of the boundless prairies of North Dakota, "the new land of plenty where a man's fortune was measured by the number of his sons, and a farm could be had even without money".

Thus it was that Miss Thompson reached North Dakota, land of 46-below and 115-above weather, of droughts, of snows, blows, and blizzards. Most of her story is devoted to the efforts of the family to establish itself on the land and of pleasant associations with Norwegian, Russian, and German neighbors, who had not been infected by the virus of prejudice. Her well-felt description of the landscape, cultivation of the soil, changes of the seasons, care of the animals, harvesting, and all the simple pleasures of rural life are enough to make one know that the author has a sensitive nature, a romantic streak, a keen sense of humor, and astonishing vitality. Sat 5-11-46 A sudden streak of prosperity brought about by inflated prices of flax during World War I brought out the nomad in Pop again, and he moved on to the town of Bismarck, then to Mandan, where he entered the second-hand furniture business. In the towns as in the country Miss Thompson associated more with whites than with Negroes and her brushes with discrimination were few and mild. An occasional shout of "nigger" from some urchin on the street could soon be forgotten in an environment where most folks treated her as an equal.

Financial difficulties which jeopardized her education brought her to the notice of the Reverend Riley, a minister who practiced what he preached. Taking her to his home to work in order that she might continue her course at the University of North Dakota, he treated her as one of the family. When Dawn college, at Lawrence, Iowa, called him as president, she went along and there received her degree. After graduation, she went to Chicago to find work for which her training in sociology and journalism had prepared her, but this was the period of the Great Depression and a job of any kind was almost impossible to get. Working at anything she found to do, at one time for WPA, Miss Thompson finally secured a place as interviewer for the United States Employment Service, which position she still holds.

"American Daughter" points up a contrast to the books in which the Negro and his frustrations resulting from racial prejudice are the solitary theme, for it describes, at least, the positive side — a character without pathological symptoms developed in surroundings where the struggle for recognition and equality were absent. To say this is not to say that the book proves the point more so. It has always been known that discrimination in the United States tends to be in direct proportion to the number of Negroes in the population of a given area. However, if the safety of democracy demands that Americans know the tragic stories of racial injustice as depicted by Wright and others, the realization of democracy can be furthered too by an acquaintance with its practice in sections of the country so little publicized as the one of which Miss Thompson writes. Sat. 5-11-46

Preacher on a Southern Circuit

The Worker New York

Reviewed by BEN FIELD

BLOOD OF THE LAMB, by Charles H. Baker, Jr. Rinehart & Co. $2.50.

BLOOD OF THE LAMB is the story of the rascalities of Love Gudger, preacher. Having had to flee from other sections of the cult-infested South because of his misconduct, Gudger settles down in Central Florida where he picks up again and lives off the backwoods people with fraudulent religion. And he gets fat on it, according to the author. 12.24.

Accompanying this faker on his circuit, which blows out all the fuses for the Lord, are his wife Birdie and their offspring Luke. Birdie is a huge woman who in the early days of their marriage used the bullwhip to punish her husband for his adultery; later, her flesh became too much for her. Luke is a gawk, who, having lost his virginity in the arms of Miz Nellemadge, gets dosed up, and at the instigation of his father attributes his condition to the pretty daughter of Ma Conroy, one of the few decent people in this novel. Preacher Budger bears the Conroys a grudge because the girl has rejected his advances, and so he whips up the community against this family. The book ends with these backwoods people on a rampage in which they burn the Conroy cabin and drive the family out into the world.

There are hundreds of religious cults in the South. Millions of poor whites and Negroes, living under the drags of extreme poverty, grasp at anything to ease themselves of their burdens and to give their lives a meaning. This makes them a prey to religious crooks, to hell-raising evangelists, to preachers of hate who are the dibbles of Fascism.

It is only against this sort of background that "Blood of the Lamb" can be understood and evaluated. To the author the behavior of the lecherous preacher and the carryings on of the most "colorful" characters is a sort of burlesque show. The novel, which could have been boiled down to make a better narrative, is padded to bring out as much of this color as possible. It becomes strained and pretentious. Men and women are elongated and twisted far more than by poverty and ignorance in the concave-convex mirror held up by the author. Sun. 5.26.46

More illuminating that his attitude towards the poor whites is Baker's feelings towards the Negroes. During the first half of the novel Negro is spelled with a small "n," and then the letter is capitalized, and you begin to wonder for the nth time why. Accordingly to the author, the Negro has an "inborn racial cunning." He describes a Negro couple, the woman exploring for "entomological sublessees" in her man's "kinky wool." Sun. 5.26.46

In Carson McCuller's "Members of the Wedding" reviewed here recently, we have that type of novel in which the author is so busy burrowing to the depths that she loses sight of the social forces which can be used to help explain the turns in people and events. "Blood of the Lamb" goes to the other extreme. Everything is on the surface; there is no depth, no heart, no understanding.

This novel has been praised for its Rabelaisianism by reviewers who are so blind that they see lumps of gold in droppings. The delight men and women take in each others bodies, their lustiness and raciness enrich life. And it is unfortunate that there are among us people who are so afraid of this vigor, so fearful of using the occasional Anglo-Saxon word which is part of the bone structure of our language that they become guilty of Philistinism, of catering to the petty bourgeois, of dolling up the so-called family magazine. Such people would have us sip life and suck it through a straw.

But in "Blood of the Lamb" the bawdiness is not hearty; the realism does not cleanse the body with great guffaws and a deep tolerance for people. It seems to be touched with a contempt, denigrating men and women so that they are like a bunch of larva scuttling around in a manure puddle.

The color that the novelist should look for now, it seems to me, can not be found in the blood of the lamb. It is found in the blood and sweat of the people, among whom we count these Florida crackers and backwoods Negroes. With all their limitations and despite Mr. Baker, they are the fist, the heart, yes, the brain without whom we can never work our way fully into the light.

'Strange Fruit' No Attempt To Reform, Author States

Daily Worker Atlanta, Ga. Sun. 6-16-46

CLAYTON, Ga.—(ANP) — Lillian Smith, author of the best selling novel "Strange Fruit," interviewed in her mountain home here recently, said she had no thought of reform when she wrote the book. It was intended to hold up a mirror to life in the south, she explained. 6-16-46

Recalling dramatically has sold already has sold almost 2,000,000 copies. Miss Smith said it was a play about white and Negro, and by persons who feel imprisoned by old customs, but don't know how to free themselves.

"I wouldn't dream of living anywhere except in the south. I love the people. We can't have a world in which everybody leaves home, can we?"

At 46, Miss Smith is still youthful, very alert, extremely articulate

The publication, 'South Today,' which she has edited along with Paula Snelling, also a southerner, temporarily is suspended after 10 years of effective expression. It will be published again when she returns from India, or which she sails this month.

The play, the author's first for the professional theatre, was brought to Broadway by contributions of friends of hers, while and by persons who felt the book Approximately $13,000 of the $102,000 needed for the play's production was contributed by Southerners, she kindly toward the Negro, and by persons who felt the book Approximately $13,000 of the $102,000 needed for the play's production was contributed by Southerners, she explained. 6-16-46

VARIED GIFTS

Miss Smith's favorite taxi driver contributed $1,000; her colored

9 1946

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Sat 5-11-46

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Sat. 5-11-46

cook invested $50, a colored truck driver, $500, and 13 of Clayton's 900 citizens aided the fund. Much of the money was brought to "Miss 'Lil' in $5 and $10 bills.

Miss Smith, whose forbears all lived in or near Clayton, resides on a mountain near here which she owns. It is called "Old Screamer," and is located about a mile and a half from town. In a little rock house atop the mountain, she worked for seven years on Strange Fruit. During that time, the author also participated in the life of the North Georgia community, and has the affection and respect of her neighbors.

After completion of the novel she now is working on "Mr. White Man." Miss Smith says she will be "through with race subjects for awhile." Some what disappointed by the reaction of Broadway drama critics to her play, she promises that it will return to New York.

SEES IMPRISONMENT

Observing on the south, Miss Smith says, "It is full of decent, civilized intelligent people who feel imprisoned by old customs, but don't know how to free themselves.

"I wouldn't dream of living anywhere except in the south. I love the sweetness and graciousness of the people. We can't have a world in which everybody leaves home, run we?"

At 48, Miss Smith is still youthful, very alert, extremely articulate

The publication, 'South Today,' which she has edited along with Paula Snelling, also a southerner, temporarily is suspended after 10 years of effective expression. It will be published again when she returns from India, or which she sails this month.

Preacher on a Southern Circuit

The Worker

Reviewed by BEN FIELD

BLOOD OF THE LAMB, by Charles H. Baker, Jr. Rinehart & Co. $2.50.

BLOOD OF THE LAMB is the story of the rascalities of Love Gudger, preacher. Having had to flee from other sections of the cult-infested South because of his misconduct, Gudger settles down in Central Florida where he picks up again and lives off the backwoods people with fraudulent religion. And he gets fat on it, according to the author.

N.Y.

Accompanying this faker on his circuit, which blows out all the fuses for the Lord, are his wife Birdie and their offspring Luke. Birdie is a huge woman who in the early days of their marriage used the bullwhip to punish her husband for his adultery; later, her flesh became too much for her. Luke is a gawk, who, having lost his virginity in the arms of Miz Nellemadge, gets dosed up, and at the instigation of his father attributes his condition to the pretty daughter of Ma Conroy, one of the few decent people in this novel. Preacher Budger bears the Conroys a grudge because the girl has rejected his advances, and so he whips up the community against this family. The book ends with these backwoods people on a rampage in which they burn the Conroy cabin and drive the family out into the world.

There are hundreds of religious cults in the South. Millions of poor whites and Negroes, living under the drags of extreme poverty, grasp at anything to ease themselves of their burdens and to give their lives a meaning. This makes them a prey to religious crooks, to hell-raising evangelists, to preachers of hate who are the dibbles of Fascism.

It is only against this sort of background that "Blood of the Lamb" can be understood and evaluated. To the author the behavior of the lecherous preacher and the carryings on of the most "colorful" characters is a sort of burlesque show. The novel, which could have been boiled down to make a better narrative, is padded to bring out as much of this color as possible. It becomes strained and pretentious. Men and women are elongated and twisted far more than by poverty and ignorance in the concave-convex mirror held up by the author.

Sun. 5.26.46

More illuminating that his attitude towards the poor whites is Baker's feelings towards the Negroes. During the first half of the novel Negro is spelled with a small "n," and then the letter is capitalized, and you begin to wonder for the nth time why. According to the author, the Negro has an "inborn racial cunning." He describes a Negro couple, the woman exploring for "entomological sublessees" in her man's "kinky wool."

Sun. 5.26.46

In Carson McCuller's "Members of the Wedding" reviewed here recently, we have that type of novel in which the author is so busy burrowing to the depths that she loses sight of the social forces which can be used to help explain the turns in people and events. "Blood of the Lamb" goes to the other extreme. Everything is on the surface; there is no depth, no heart, no understanding.

This novel has been praised for its Rabelaisianism by reviewers who are so blind that they see lumps of gold in droppings. The delight men and women take in each others bodies, their lustiness and raciness enrich life. And it is unfortunate that there are among us people who are so afraid of this vigor, so fearful of using the occasional Anglo-Saxon word which is part of the bone structure of our language that they become guilty of Philistinism, of catering to the petty bourgeois, of dolling up the so-called family magazine. Such people would have us sip life and suck it through a straw.

But in "Blood of the Lamb" the bawdiness is not hearty; the realism does not cleanse the body with great guffaws and a deep tolerance for people. It seems to be touched with a contempt, denigrating men and women so that they are like a bunch of larva scuttling around in a manure puddle.

The color that the novelist should look for now, it seems to me, can not be found in the blood of the lamb. It is found in the blood and sweat of the people, among whom we count these Florida crackers and backwoods Negroes. With all their limitations and despite Mr. Baker, they are the fist, the heart, yes, the brain without whom we can never work our way fully into the light.

'Strange Fruit' No Attempt To Reform, Author States

Daily Worker Atlanta Bur.
Sun. 6-16-46

CLAYTON, Ga.—(ANP)— Lillian Smith, author of the best selling novel "Strange Fruit," interviewed in her mountain home outside here recently said the book was not an attempt to reform the south.

Recalling dramatization of the book, which already has sold at least 2,000,000 copies, Miss Smith declared: "It was a play about white people trying to live in the south. The play's production was brought to the south, Negro, and white friends of hers, white and Negro, and persons who felt up a mirror to life in the south. toward the book. Approximately $13,000 of the $102,000 need the play's production was kindly explained dramatization was sold at nately $1,000. Her colored Smith's favorite taxi driver by southerners, she confirmed as it has. I was

Postwar Woman Wants Her Novels 'Cleaned Up'

By Judith Klein Post

NEW YORK.—A revulsion against smut, a renewed interest in the social problem novel and a demand for contemporary family novels are the three dominant characteristics of women's postwar literary taste, Miss Virginia Kirkus, critic, lecturer and author, said last week. Lun. 6-9-46

Founder and director of her own Bookshop Service, which reviews and recommends more than 4000 books a year, Miss Kirkus recently returned from a 10,000-mile lecture tour of the Middle West and the West Coast, during which she addressed 20 women's organizations and three college student assemblies. Washington, D.C.

One question that always was asked during the discussion periods that followed Miss Kirkus' lectures was: "When are the publishers going to wake up to the fact that we don't want smut?" The women, she said, would refer to sensual passages in books like "The White Tower," "A Lion Is in the Street" and "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," passages which in their opinion added nothing to the intrinsic value of a book.

'Amber' a Bore

"During the war," Miss Kirkus declared, "many people turned to books for emotional satisfaction and [illegible]rse, the so-called smut satisfied them. But the average woman wants to feel that in reading she is pulling herself up both emotionally and socially. Feminine disapproval of 'Forever Amber'—which incidentally bored most women—was a matter of taste rather than morals."

In books such as "The Grapes of Wrath" and "Strange Fruit," which deal with races, nationalities or social groups with which clubwomen do not identify themselves, the sensual passages evoke no objections, Miss Kirkus pointed out. Women readers, she has found, consider such passages in line with the book's social implications. Sun 6-4-46

"They do want contemporary social significance in their fiction," the lecturer said. "Earth and High Heaven," dealing with anti-Semitism, and "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" and "The Street," both of which are concerned with racial issues, are paving the way, Miss Kirkus believes, for more social-problem fiction, in which interest waned during the war. Washington

More of Soames

The desire for "more books with characters like people we know" is also increasing. Miss Kirkus said, "while interest in religious fiction and family reminiscence is on the wane. Women want a modern approximation of the "Forsythe Saga," contemporary real-life-problem fiction, but with romance. She conceded that they are possibly looking for intellectualized soap opera. D. C.

Miss Kirkus said she was afraid that women do select their reading matter by the best-seller lists, friends' recommendations, the size of an advertisement for the book or the prominence of its review in the Sunday supplement. D. C.

"There's also," she said, "a sort of intellectual snobbism that makes many women join monthly book clubs, or go to book-and-author luncheons to see the authors although they don't always read their books."

Exotic Nonconformist

New York Times

LAFCADIO HEARN. By Vera McWilliams. 451 pp. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $3.

By WILLARD PRICE

WHY did Hearn tell only half the truth about Japan? The half he told was beautiful truth, and beautifully told. Yet no man has more seriously misled the western world as to the nature and aims of the Japanese.

A strong and in some respects new light has been thrown upon "the exotic little nonconformist" in this finely written biography. Two Hearns appear. The oneway loved Japan and wrote about it. The other hated Japan and kept quiet about it. How this double standard was possible on the part of a man quite free from intellectual dishonesty becomes clear as we read. 4-14-46

Hearn was blind in one eye. Injured by a flying rope when he was 16, he was deeply humiliated by his disfigurement. He considered himself "horribly deformed." He shunned the society that was rightly his and fancied extravagant virtues in the society that he felt did not scorn him. So he married the mulatto girl, Alethea, wrote glowing studies of American Negro life, immersed himself later in Creole New Orleans, then in Martinique, then in the far forgetfulness of Japan.

It would be too simple to say that this was all because of the loss of an eye. That was only the crowning indignity to a supersensitive nature. As a child he was cut off from other boys by a frail physique, nervous instability and defective vision. Born in Greece of a British Army father and Maltese mother, he was sent with his mother to live with relatives in Ireland. Homesick for the Mediterranean, dark-skinned Rosa kept the boy dressed in Ionic costume with earrings gleaming through his long black hair. Foreign in look and language, he was not acceptable to Dublin youth.

His mother went mad, his father was always away in the wars, and his guardians thought the way to cure a small boy of fear of the dark was to lock him in a dark room. An overwrought imagination peopled the room with horrible shapes. He had the misfortune to be taught the Christian religion in terms of hell-fire. Therefore, when he discovered in an old book the clear, beautiful figures of the Greek gods, he fell in love with paganism and gave it his loyalty forever after. In Japan he was the sworn enemy of Christian missionaries and a devotee of "heathen" Shinto. With his soul's seeing eye he searched out its beauties. If he turned his blind eye to its growing menace as an instrument of militarism, it was because of his crying inner need for something to believe in. 4-14-46

YET he was always conscious of a horrible disquiet. He did not allow it to get into his writing. Reading his delicious, brooklike prose one sees only a happily contemplative mind completely at peace with its environment. Yet these sweet-flowing cadences represented the author's desperate attempt to escape a pessimism close to despair that led him more than once nearly to suicide. After writing in praise of dark Alethea he tried to throw himself into the Miami Canal. He wrote charming essays concerning his school-teaching experiences in Kumamoto. But in a moment of let-down, he wrote in a private letter to Basil Hall Chamberlain that Kumamoto had become his idea of a prison in the bottom of hell. "He would be glad to work anywhere else for half his present salary if he could only have 50 per cent more peace of mind! And part of the desired peace of mind, he had come to think, could be obtained by working for white men instead of modernized Japanese." And in an indigo letter to Ellwood Hendrick he lamented. "The upper classes

© 1930, William Edwin Rudge.
Lafcadio Hearn. By Robert Kuwahara.

are becoming corrupt. The old courtesy, the old faith, the old kindness are vanishing like snow in the sun." 4-14-46

He was frightfully alone. He made friends with pitiful eagerness, only to discard them furiously at the first fancied slight. Without discernible reason he instructed the editor of Harper's Monthly, who had sponsored his trip to Japan, to go to the devil. He summarily changed publishers because of "insults" in a biographical sketch. (Heaven knows what he would have to say to Vera McWilliams, in spite of the fact that her account of him is entirely sympathetic.) He threw off Professor Chamberlain who had made possible his first teaching engagement in Japan. He resigned in high dudgeon from the staff of Tokyo Imperial University because a visitor had been allowed to come unannounced into his classroom.

He never came close to the Japanese except Setsuko, his wife. She served as his intermediary. She was constantly on the search for facts, incidents, folklore, that he could put into his books. The Japanese male remained an enigma to him. In a letter to Hendrick he admitted that one could never really get close to the Japanese men. Even one's best friends had a certain far-offness. And shortly before his death he recalled ruefully the words of a Japanese associate some years previously: "When you find, in four or five years more, that you cannot understand the Japanese at all, then you will begin to know something about them." 7-19-46

AND yet, out of this baffling semi-darkness, this world half seen, this isolation that he sought but hated, this well of bitterness, came the loveliest writing yet done concerning Japan, and interpretations profoundly true, so far as they go. A placid man could not have done it. "Work with me is a pain. * * * Unless somebody does or says something horribly mean to me, I can't do certain kinds of work. * * * It strikes me as being possibly a peculiar morbid condition. If it is, I trust that some day the power will come to do something really extraordinary—I mean very unique. What is the good of having a morbid, sensitive spot, if it cannot be utilized to some purpose worth achieving?"

This is a valuable book on Japan and on Hearn.

Lynchers, Kluxers Dictate Tenn. Law

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

Book Gives 25-Year Data on Mob Terror

NEW YORK—(ANP)—Lynchers and Kluxers administer the law that is now trying to imprison 25 Columbia, Tenn., citizens on trial at Lawrenceburg for alleged participation in last February's rioting, a booklet being published by Robert Minor reveals.

Reportedly based on eye-witness accounts, the volume charges that at least two Maury County law enforcement officers have been involved in one of 203 lynchings the youth's arms while he was which the author says have occurred in the State during the past 75 years. Sat. 9-28-46

C. Hayes Denton, who ordered the legal prosecution of the 25 defendants, is reputed to have participated in the lynching of 17-year-old Cordie Cheek 13 years ago.

Coroner's Role Cited

Bert Erwin, Maury County coroner, is alleged to have held

is that Federal Judge Elmer D. Davies, who has repeatedly ruled against efforts of NAACP defense lawyers to obtain a fair trial, is a former Klansman.

The booklet, being published by New Century Press, tells about burnings at the stake, hangings of countless murders by small gangs over a 25-year period.

The eyewitness James, is but a continuation of the attempt, Minor contends.

Says Judge Klansman

A further astonishing revelation, been thoroughly checked with au-

9 1946

"The Dew of Jordan Is a Variable Elixir." *Thomas Benton.*

Bathing in the Blood of the Lamb

DEW ON JORDAN. By Harold Preece and Celia Kraft. 221 pp. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $2.50.

New York Times
By JOHN BICKNELL
N.Y.

IN the Country of the Word, each religious sect, armed with a battery of theological argument and the dynamite of human emotion, wages war on its rivals, each claiming the true faith. No matter how trivial the issue, the battle is always joined with great fervor. Here, in the mountains and fields of the South and Southwest, where life is marginal and often desperate, men and women endow themselves with fine titles; they are Saints or Elders, Deacons or Prophets, Apostles or Storm Troopers of the Conquering Church. Thus they wrest uncertain glory from inglorious circumstances.

From their cabin in the Cumberlands, the authors, both avid sect collectors, rambled far and near. They watched the dubious ecstasies of the snake cults, and listened to the Word as proclaimed by Holiness Sects, Disciples of Christ, Hardshell Baptists, and a score of others. One of their neighbors was Brother Myers the Watcher, who daily scanned the clouds for the coming of Armageddon. What they saw they have set down on their "writin' machine," as the neighbors called it. Their stories, some hilarious, some pathetic, some moving, are told with a Chaucerian gusto and a minimum of sociological comment. Wisely, the people and their preachers are allowed to tell their own stories and preach their own sermons in colorful language and salty metaphor.

Comic indeed is the story of the Ascension on Rainey Street, wherein the Thirteenth Apostle, with the aid of the town idiot, hornswoggles the good wives of Rainey Street into selling all their wordly goods in anticipation of the end of time. Needless to say, the good wives are left standing in their petticoats—"ascension robes"; the money, and a local maiden, all having fled with the Apostle. And there is the epic battle at Horse Cave between the "one cuppers" and the "many cuppers" in which the rival factions play havoc with the meeting house. Not every tale lives up to this standard of excitement, but none is dull and all have their interest.

For the dew of Jordan is a variable elixir. When distilled from corn mash, it becomes a fiery and necessary bracer for anyone who would fondle the pine rattlers of Jeth Henderson's snake cult. And when Allie Watkins thanks the Lord for taking her child home and the preacher blesses her for trusting in prayers rather than doctors, the dew of Jordan works as a pitiful narcotic. Again, it may be rank poison in the deadly cup of racial hatred poured out by the "Prophets of the Crooked Cross." Or it may be the communion cup of Brother Cessna or Owen Whitfield, in whose churches black and white pray together. This in a land where "lynching and praying had been set patterns." Often enough the dew of Jordan is a gaudy concoction of narcotic and stimulant, of poison and antidote, of sectarianism and sex.

4-28-46

AND though the authors provide no extensive social analysis, a clear pattern nevertheless emerges. There are the petty religious charlatans, prototypes of Erskine Caldwell's Journeyman, who rob their followers and despoil virgins, cheerful rascals all. There are the innocents like Brother Myers, sincere, but "out of this world." Then there are the big rascals, well-heeled and vicious, the peddlers of native fascism. And there are men like Claude Williams and Share-cropper Dan, who preach the social gospel with a Bible in one hand and a union card in the other, thus reminding us of Steinbeck's Casy. As sometimes happens, the rascals are drawn more vividly than some of the more honest brethren. Big Joe Toungate is seen in action, but not Claude Williams.

Wordsworth once remarked that men's hearts are slow to languish, but are easily "turned aside and abused." To this "Dew on Jordan" is fresh evidence. It is evidence, too, that the world is breaking in on this land where the Battle of Jericho is more real than the Battle of Stalingrad. As the authors point out in their final pages, "these little sects were the only functioning democracies for millions of the disinherited, disfranchised and dispossessed."

Racism

WHITE MAN'S BURDEN. By Ruth Smith. 222 pp. New York: The Vanguard Press. $2.

By EDWARD M. JENKS

THIS book's theme is racism in America—specifically, the bigotry displayed by some Americans toward others no less American because their skin is dark.

The author, as an intelligent if naive freshman at a Kansas church college years ago, was outraged to discover the existence of a Negro "problem," when a would-be student was barred from attending the college because he was a Negro. "A clear-minded child," writes Miss Smith, could have faced the issue better than she and other students did. But at the time she "hadn't known what to do" and "just let the urgency lessen." Since then Miss Smith has learned how to meet the issue.

Sun. 6-16-46

Miss Smith has spent many years teaching Negroes, a career on which she decided after hearing a brilliant and able young Negro woman — Juliette Derricotte—talk on race relations at a Y. M. C. A. Summer Conference. Miss Smith's first teaching experience was in a Southern school. The fact that it was a church school made doubly distressing to her the ambiguity of the school's position in the community: Negro pupils being taught the ways of democracy by whites who, outside the school, were expected to observe Jim Crow restrictions.

At first she fought the untenable position by defying it. She rode with Negroes in Jim Crow trains. Later she fought it by speaking out angrily. Both methods, she learned, were ineffectual. Gradually she learned to speak objectively, and this is the spirit in which she now writes.

It cannot be said that she writes well, but there is in her work an appealing sincerity. Her discussion of Negro-white relations is a wise compromise between the angry approach of some writers and the sociological approach of others. Throughout, the reader is made aware of the inspiration Miss Smith drew from Juliette Derricotte. It was the tragedy of Miss Derricotte's death, no less than the inspiration of her life, that gave the author the compelling need to write this book. She died after an automobile accident in the South—because the nearest hospital was "For Whites Only."

Hound of Heaven

The Book Review

JOSHUA BEENE AND GOD. By Jewel Gibson. 238 pp. New York: Random House. $2.50

New York, N.Y.
Sun. 10-6-46

JEWEL GIBSON'S first novel is the fanciful epic of one Joshua Ebenezer Beene, anointed of the Lord, Justice of the Peace and President of the School Board of Spring Creek. Joshua was a Texas prophet who was accorded an excess of honor in his own country. For reasons not entirely clear, practically everybody in Spring Creek was convinced that he could detour cyclones, call down rain, raise the dead and strike down the living. His chief aim was to purge the Baptist church house of its flat-dead sub-standard literature and ultimately the school board, and ultimately Mr. Gibson's novel is full of humor and poetry in this story to indicate that Mrs. Gibson could write an excellent novel of Texas starts and dead-end starts and false starts and never quite settles religion; but "Joshua Beene" is quite settles religion; but "Joshua Beene" is a flapjack and almost as flat.

RICHARD MATCH.

As the story opens, the Prophet the whole town, of Baptists and sinners and intimidated the et of Spring Creek is celebrating Holy Rollers, whom he liked to plots, and never quite his sixty-ninth birthday in con- call "pusillanimous suck-eggs, down to a consistent view ference with his God. After re- hounds of hell." Mrs. Gibson's prophet, whether as religious Creek Prophet is as American as Book of Joshua is an admiring bigot or lovable old curmudgeon.

Another Jeeter--in Store Clothes

New York Times

A HOUSE IN THE UPLANDS. By Erskine Caldwell. 238 pp. New York. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $2.50.

N. Y.

By ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS

THE characters in Erskine Caldwell's novels have been a notoriously shiftless, low-class lot. They gamble, drink, scandalously neglect their families, fortunes and social responsibilities. But they are very funny about it and sympathetic, too, in an almost poetic way. Caldwell's best work is literally pornographic, but it gives us the complex satisfaction of feeling shocked, charmed, amused and sociological all at once. 4-28-46

In "A House in the Uplands" the formula has significantly changed. Grady Dunbar, the dominant character, is no turnip-stealing Jeeter Lester but one of the gentry, a plantation owner, a proud and handsome man. He has a beautiful wife who loves him, or wants to. But he behaves just as badly as his poor-white predecessors in the earlier novels. Grady spends much of his time gambling away the last of his estate at a sordid roadhouse run by a gangster. He returns home only when he is ferociously drunk. At home he contemptuously ignores his wife, carries on with Negro girls in the old slave cabins and treats with vengeful brutality the few Negro workers still kept in peonage on the crumbling estate.

An unimaginative bully, Grady is not funny. Neither is he sympathetic despite what his wife Lucyanne says: "I feel awfully sorry for him sometimes. I really do in spite of everything. I just can't help it." Although Grady is said to have charm, there is no evidence of it in "A House in the Uplands." Told with behavioristic bareness, his story is sociological only in a very elemental Darwinian way. Lucyanne's parents warned her that the Dunbar family had outlived its time by several decades and that Grady possessed practically every characteristic of Dunbar decadence. There were many similar families in the region; the Dunbars were not unique. All such families lived in varying degrees of poverty, their vitality depleted, and, fortunately, were usually incapable of reproducing their kind * * * in the course of time such families died out like a decaying tree, but meanwhile, as though nature had become impatient with delay, violence frequently broke out and removed the remaining members of such a family overnight.

So it is with the Dunbars; at the end of the book the mother and son die within a few minutes of each other, like Hamlet and Gertrude.

THE dying-out of the Dunbars might have seemed a good theme to Zola in the period of his "La Bête Humaine," but it is several decades too late for that kind of naturalism now. And Zolaesque documentation has never been Caldwell's strong point. Zola prepared to write "La Terre," his novel of peasant life, by driving around in the country for a couple of weeks in a landau filled with government reports. Caldwell's sociology has always been rather sketchy, but his interior documentation, so to speak, is completely true. He lived for years among characters like those he describes, listened to them talk and, above all, had an amused, imaginative perception of the way life seems to them, to Jeeter Lester when he smells broom-sedge burning, or to Milo Scroggins of "Trouble in July," when he sees Katie Barlow lying on the cotton in the field house, or even to Maud Douthit of "Tragic Ground" when she thinks the earnest young social worker is a necktie salesman trying to lure her husband to a trailer camp.

4-28-46

WE believe these people exist, because if such talk and behavior did not exist, no one could ever invent them. But if Caldwell's great comic talent makes his sociology credible, it also transcends it. His people are not only acted up; they act, and we act with them; sympathetic to their purposes, even though we know they will be comically set at odds: Jeeter Lester trying to sell his load of blackjack, Sheriff McCurtain in "Trouble in July" trying to escape from Narcissa Calhoun and her petition, Ty-ty Walden digging his hole in "God's Little Acre," Spence Douthit in "Tragic Ground" setting off with the social worker's money to rescue his daughter from a sporting house. By acting imaginatively with such characters we no doubt give expression to all sorts of dark and anti-social impulses. At the same time we feel safely detached from them by social superiority and a knowledge of the conditions that make his wife Lucyanne is as primally motivated as some of her lower-class predecessors. But she goes about achieving satisfaction in a more genteel way, which takes away the shock and the amusement, and puts nothing in their place. 4-28-46

It is good for writers to change their formulas. But art is an irreducible complex of interdependent forces. If one element is changed, all must be changed. Erskine Caldwell could write a book like "A House in the Uplands" only because he does not think about his art. Apparently he still writes with the arrogant, uncritical dependence on impulse that he describes in his preface to the Modern Library Edition of "God's Little Acre." That remarkable document of the creative life shows how such a novel as "A House in the Uplands" can come to be. It also suggests at least one of the things that are wrong with American letters them as they are. Finally we are sufficiently frightened by the cruelties Caldwell describes to want to change such conditions.

This is a delicate balance to maintain, and by centering on Grady Dunbar in "A House in the Uplands" Caldwell has completely upset it. Grady, an educated man, doesn't talk like Jeeter Lester. But neither does he talk like an educated man. Mostly he sounds like the villain in the Tom Swift series:

"What do you mean by that?" a defiant farm lad says to him.

"I mean what it sounds like. You're not as dumb as you look. You know what I mean."

"I don't have to answer that."

"You will if I say so."

And so on, for pages.

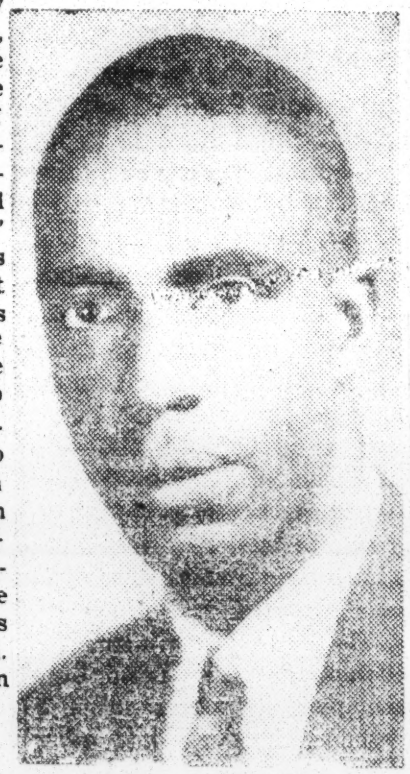
We don't care whether or not Grady succeeds in getting out of his gambling debts, since he will inevitably incur new ones. And

Novel on Numbers Racket is Published

Washington Tribune, D.C.

A new novel on the Negro, that threatens to rival the realism of "The Street" by Ann Petry and the dual smash hits by Richard Wright "Black Boy" and "Native Son", written by Lewis A. H. Caldwell, entitled "The Policy King" is slated to hit newsstands soon.

The Policy King revolves around the Marshall family, members of which see life through different lens. Joe, a son of a



LEWIS CADWELL

minister, quarrels with his father Reverend Marshall and leaves home.

After leaving home he becomes entangled in the policy racket and amasses quite a bit of money, which he uses to ease his mother's financial burden. Like most of the melodramatic tales of the underworld, Joe gets "bumped off" in an underworld battle. 5-14-46

This brings in his brother Jerry, who is a college trained lad. Jerry dedicates his efforts towards the avenging of his brother's murder. This relentless pursuit of his brother's murderer makes him king of the underworld.

Meanwhile, Helen, a sister, cries for reform. She leads a reform group against the evils of numbers and the underworld. Her movement paves the way to the pen for her brother Jerry.

Mr. Caldwell spins quite a yarn and seems to have quite a knowledge of what goes on with the pennies to dollars are placed on a digit by thousands each day. It's one of these social tales exposing the ghettos that Negroes are forced in from north to south. Tues.

To Appear Here Fri. and Sat.

The author, Lewis Caldwell will appear at the Matilee's Book Shoppe for an advance prevue, this Friday afternoon from 4 p. m. untill 6 p. m. And on Saturday, he likewise will be on hand at the bookshoppe located at 1730 14th Street, N. W. from 7 until 9.

He is a native of Chicago and wrote his master's thesis on the subject "The Policy Game in Chicago."—NEAL SWEENEY.

Meanwhile various forms of exploitation of a political and economic nature practiced by unscrupulous whites must cease. Not laws, but interracial education and projects such as the Springfield Plan will ease the tension, Logan believes.

Exploding the myth that Negro males desire miscegenation, he deals frankly with the equally dangerous mating of white men and Negro girls. He draws his own rigid color lines in the matter of sex.

Attacking racketeers both Negro and white who promote vice, gambling and excessive drinking, Logan, however, realizes that social and economic pressure is the main source of all these evils.

Logan asks his race to be an example to their white brothers in the matter of Christian tolerance, humility and diligence as we all rise slowly toward the responsibilities of living in a democracy.

"A Negro's Faith in America" should give all of us a new faith in our country.

SGT. LOGAN

A Negro's Faith in America. By Spencer Logan. Macmillan. 88 pp. $1.75. 6-16-46

STAFF SERGT. SPENCER LOGAN has written a brilliant little book which should shame white America into remedial action. It is the testament of a Negro soldier who loves America and hates interracial strife. It is the deeply moving declaration of a New Jersey boy who was president of this high school class, editor of his high school paper, member of the track team, but all too soon was made aware of his second-class citizenship.

Spencer Logan has not become embittered. He has become thoughtful. He fought gladly for his country despite Army Jim Crow tactics. With magnificent self-restraint he examines the rift between white and Negro and finds neither side guiltless. He preaches rigid self-criticism, self-discipline and self-improvement to his fellow Negroes.

Holding up George Washington Carver, the great Negro scientist, as the ideal type leader for his people, he boldly attacks those of both races who seek to create dissension. He does not believe in panaceas such as those offered by Garvey's "Back to Africa Movement" or the "Pan African Congress" of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois. Negroes and whites are in America to stay. They are evolving slowly (he believes) toward an harmonious working arrangement.

Henry Varnum Poor's portrait of Carson McCullers, author of "The Member of the Wedding," which is reviewed at the left. It is her third novel.

Life Says 'Come In' To a Child

A Review by Dorothea Cornwell

THE MEMBER OF THE WEDDING: By Carson McCullers. 195 pp. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

For her literary accomplishments, Carson McCullers has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and an award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. "The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter" was published when Miss McCullers was 22, but it had a maturity and insight praiseworthy in an author of any age. Her second book, "Reflections In a Golden Eye," had originality but little warmth. "The Wedding," her latest novel, is her best so far. To insight and originality, she has added the qualities of depth and compassion. The characters in "The Wedding" hover between pathos and comedy. At their most solemn, a sort of divine humor bubbles under the surface. Their gayest is very close to tears and madness.

There are only three central characters—five, counting the wedding of Francine's brother. And the wedding should be included because it symbolizes to 12-year-old Francine the warm, wide club of the world. She wants to belong, with the desperate intensity of the very young when they discover the universal loneliness of the spirit. During the long Carolina summer, the desire to belong, to be a third of the wedding party, grows until it seems certain and fitting: "And we will meet them. Everybody. We will be walking down a dark road and see a lighted house and knock on the door and strangers will rush to meet us and say: Come in! Come in! We will know decorated aviators and New York people and movie stars. We will have thousands of friends. We will belong to so many clubs that we can't even keep track of them all. We will be members of the whole world . . ."

And there is sad, black Bernice who has one wild, blue glass eye, the eye a gesture of defiance toward a world which won't let her belong. She has had four husbands and can take a fifth, T.T., any day. But then: ". . . T.T., he don't make me shiver none." That lack is important, even if marriage with T.T. would mean that Bernice could leave Francine's kitchen and: ". . . Stand behind the cash register at his restaurant and pat my foot."

The fourth important character is Henry, an inarticulate little boy who watches his elders soberly through round spectacles and then draws Dali-like pictures upon the kitchen walls. The scope and setting of the novel are small, a sultry kitchen in a South Carolina town, three misfits and the tragedy of a 12-year-old. But then, Carson McCullers does not require a large canvas.

LINCOLN AND THE SOUTH. By J. G. Randall. Louisiana State University Press. 1946. 166 pp. $1.50.

NO BOOK which has come out in recent years concerning the historic South has touched upon a more fascinating theme or worked a richer mine of material than these four lectures dealing with Lincoln's relation to the geographical locale of the Lost Cause.

There has always been an important body of opinion south of the Potomac holding the thesis that had Lincoln lived the reconstruction period would have been both shortened and softened and the Union reconstituted with a fraction of the sectional bitterness which in many places remains in strength to the present day. Lincoln's known plans for a reconstituted South and the entire trend of his character make that view incontestable.

But Professor Randall has implemented this thesis with a wealth of detail which raises his lectures before the University of Louisiana to the dignity of original material. Being himself Professor of History from the University of Illinois, Lincoln's adopted home state, he brings to his guest chair a viewpoint which speaks with authentic research. Had this material been worked up into a book of its own, instead of being merely printed as a collection of four lectures, one ventures the opinion that it would have appealed to a sensationally large number of readers. Even as printed lecture material it is very much on the readable side and fascinating in its human depth.

That Lincoln was Kentucky born of Virginia born parents, even though of lowly position, frequently escapes notice of the popular mind, so complete has been his historic identification with the North. Professor Randall approaches this fact with no attitude of genealogical technology. And the Lincoln marriage to a woman of Southern family with the background of a Kentucky belle is used in the same spirit.

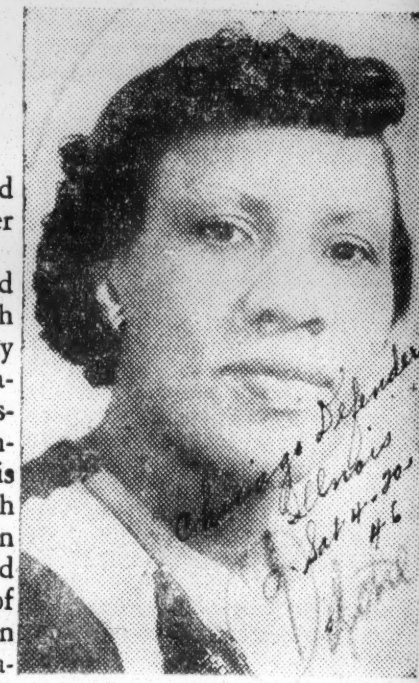
Both circumstances are employed as material to explain Lincoln's attitude to slavery, the motivating force of his life. He was born a Southern poor white familiar with toil. He became a self-made and successful lawyer and politician and married a woman of the slave-holding classes by whose Southern relatives he was warmly received into the bosom of the family . He was thus thoroughly familiar with the good and the evil side of slavery as an institution. Being at the same time a lawyer he held a legalistic attitude toward the constitution and denied with his whole lawyer's soul the right of secession.

The resulting strains in an era of passion and unreason gripped his life and broke his heart. He had seen the slave markets and had loathed secession but the smell of Southern country soil was strong in his nostrils and the warmth of his in-laws' Kentucky homes glowed in his memory. Lincoln, as the Randall lectures make clear beyond a doubt, wished to eradicate the evil and salve the wounds of the good and heal it. But this Southern sympathy was his undoing.

Any volume which publicises the fact in modern Dixie, as does "Lincoln and the South" with incontestable proof, deserves a much wider audience than is received by the usual series of class room lectures. This is a book in its own right. It has a healing message which we need today.

Hugh Stanard

AUTHOR



ODELLA PHELPS WOOD

Author, whose first novel, "High Ground?" will be issued this week by the Exposition Press, New York. The book is a study of Negro life in America. Miss Wood lives in Orange, N.J.

'U. S. Must Integrate Negroes—Myrdal

NEW YORK—America, for its international prestige, power and future security, needs to demonstrate to the world that American Negroes can be satisfactorily integrated into its democracy, urged Gunnar Myrdal, Swedish economist and student of America's Negro problem, in "Treasury for the Free World," just issued by Arco Publishing Company, New York.

New Book Deals With Sleeping Car Porters

Atlanta, Georgia.—"The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters." a record of one of the most interesting labor organizations in the United States has just come off the press. It was written by Dr. Brailsford R. Brazeal, professor of economics at Morehouse College and has been published by Harper and Brothers of New York and London. The graphic drawing on the cover of the book, symbolical of the serious and aggressive Pullman porter, is by the internationally famous painter, Hale Woodruff.

In 258 pages, the book relates vividly the struggle of the American Negro to secure recognition in the world of organized labor. It tells the story of the beginnings, growth and present activities of the Brotherhood which mark a noteworthy advance in the Negro's economic status.

Professor Leo Wolman of the department of economics at Columbia University, who wrote the foreword, states that "unlike many standard labor histories, Dr. Brazeal's findings depend, not on inadequate printed records but on wide personal observation, carried on for many years, of the work of the porters and of the life of their union. Students of American labor history owe a large debt to Dr. Brazeal for this account of the development of a pioneer union. From this book there is much to be learned, not only, about trade unionism in general, but the way a minority group sets about solving its own problems in a democratic setting."

Dr. Brazeal has written sympathetically, with authority and understanding of the problems of Pullman porters, the work they do and the special types of issues and grievance their work creates. Many of his conclusions are based not only upon first hand knowledge obtained through numerous interviews porters and officials of the Brotherhood, but through experiences the author, himself, had as a college student while employed in th summr as a Pullman porter.

Phases discussed and analyzed by Dr. Brazeal are (1) Factors in Pullman's Development and Labor Policies; (2) Initial Efforts of Porters to Organize; (3) Accumulating Grievances Impel Pullman Porters to Organize; (4) Techniques of Opposition and Survival; (5) Legal Action to Obtain Recognition and Higher Wages; (6) Attacks on Pullman's Employee Representation Plan; (7) Brotherhood's Relations with American Federation of Labor; (8) Brother hood Delegates at American Federation of Labor Conventions; (9) Government and Brotherhood; (10) Contractual Relatons Between Pullman and Its Porters; (11) Wage Payments to Pullman Porters; and (12) Spearhead Activities of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

The author has a career of unusual distinction in numerous professional associations on behalf of causes devoted to the advancement of the Negro. He is a graduate of Morhouse College and Columbia. University,. and. has written for numerous professional journals in the field of economics and higher education for Negroes.

Dr. Brazeal's treatment of the origin and development of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters indicates clearly that Pullman porters have achieved a significant milestone in the field of American Labor Economics.

Era Bell Thompson Honored At Tea At Univ. of Chicago

Miss Era Bell Thompson, author of the autobiography "American Daughter," recently published by the University of Chicago Press, was honored with an autograph tea Sunday, May 5 at the International House, 1414 E. 59th st.

Among the prominent literary figures who commended Miss Thompson for her straightforward presentation of the incidents of her life were Dr. W. T. Couch of the University of Chicago Press, Sylvestre Watkins, who edited "Anthology Of Negro Literature."

Miss Thompson declared that her book was one woman's opinion, and one woman's optimism, and that in it she has attempted to show that democracy is possible in America. She stated to the Defender that she was grateful for the way that the book had been received, and for the favorable reviews given it, and also that "American Daughter" was the beginning of a series of books of a similar nature.

Among the notables present were Horace R. Cayton, co-author of "Black Metropolis"; Jack Conroy, author and book reviewer; Atty. Edith Sampson Clayton, Dr. Harry J. Walker, formerly of the Mayor's Committee; Dr. Everett Hughes, professor of the University of Chicago; Rex Gorleigh of the South Side Community Art Center, and Mrs. Thelma Williams of the Friend of Negro Writers, who acted as mistress of ceremonies.

The tea was sponsored by the University of Chicago Press, and Friends of Negro Writers' Organization.

Tolerance--the American Way

AROUND THE WORLD IN ST. PAUL. By Alice L. Sickels. Illustrated. 262 pp. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. $3.

By ROBERT LASCH

SOMETIMES simple answers solve complex problems. If in times like these one feels hopelessly lost in the tangle of prejudices, hatreds, suspicions and class distinctions which seem to make it impossible for various social and racial groups to reconcile their differences, perhaps the way out is easier than we think. Why not simply try living together?

Miss Sickels, now executive director of the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit is a believer in unity through diversity. She has here written the account of an experiment in intercultural relations based on that principle.

As executive director of the International Institute at St. Paul, Minn., during the Thirties, Miss Sickels came in daily contact with the heart-breaking problems of immigrants, aliens and minority groups who found themselves clinging to the bottom rung of the social ladder in a time of fear and economic distress. She decided that what the members of St. Paul's nationality groups needed—apart from a decent chance to make a living—was a sense of belonging, but to an America which had not forgotten its origins long enough to look upon aliens with distrust and contempt.

There are more than thirty nationality and racial groups in St. Paul: Scandinavian, Irish, Swiss, French, German, Polish, Czech, Russian, Italian, Mexican, Japanese, Negro and more. As in every city, the status of the groups varied with the lateness of arrival. Assimilated second-generation people had merged into the stream of American life; had even, like Americans of longer standing, come to look upon more recent arrivals as undesirable aliens. The foreign-born, particularly those who had migrated after the first World War, found themselves outside the stream.

They huddled together in isolated little groups. Having roots in another land but a chosen stake in this one, they tried to slough their overseas origins but failed to take on the color of their new environment. Children, growing up, learned to feel ashamed of their parents' alienism. Unhappily aware of this, the older people took refuge in furtive and usually unsuccessful efforts to conceal their backgrounds. Each group tended to grow more and more isolated, to become less and less in touch with other groups and the great American mass.

RECOGNIZING the ill effects of frustration and the deeply felt, if seldom expressed, need for acceptance, Miss Sickels and her associates cast about for a means of "two-way Americanization." The task was not to induce the foreign born to conform blindly to a harsh and meaningless stereotype of "Americanism," but to nourish a living relationship between natives and immigrants. In two-way Americanization "the re-education of old-stock Americans is as necessary as teaching American ways to the alien."

Out of this thinking grew St. Paul's "Festival of Nations," an annual folk-fair at which the various nationality groups exhibit their native handicrafts, costumes, cookery, dances and social traditions. By encouraging each group to express its talents, the festival inspired pride and satisfaction that had too long been repressed. By bringing the groups together, it broke down the isolation which had bred suspicion and prejudice. But, most important of all, it aroused interest in and appreciation of the nationality groups by those Americans whose families had happened to reach these shores a generation or two earlier. Once the appeal of the festival to the older stocks had been established, Miss Sickels knew that its principal aim—"to help all the different kinds of people who live here to feel accepted as Americans"—had been accomplished.

Most of this book is the story of the festival—how it grew from a small, WPA-assisted project in the Y.W.C.A. auditorium, to a great, self-supporting civic enterprise that filled the city's block-long convention hall. Anybody who wants to sponsor a similar project will find the book an invaluable guide. The general reader will recognize in the special problems of a cooperative entertainment project images of the larger issues of group intercourse.

There is a poignant story in the anxieties that beset the festival after Pearl Harbor: the instinctive impulse to cancel it for the duration, the imagined stresses of bringing together people whose homelands were official enemies, the gradual recognition that war had made unity in diversity more important than ever, and finally the bold decision to go ahead. There is another story in the refusal of the Italians to take part, for fear of being booed by super-patriots, the eventual reversal of that decision by Italians who perferred to risk derision rather than be left out of something they had taken to their hearts, and the triumphant applause—not a boo was heard—which greeted them when they appeared.

AS it turned out, the wartime festivals were the most successful of all. They seemed to fill a need. With death and terror loose in the world, the simple friendliness of eating kolaces, borsch, sauerbraten and tamales together, healed hidden fears and revived flagging hopes. Gov. Harold E. Stassen called the festival "one sure means of creating understanding, dispelling fear and prejudice, and setting a pattern, not only for our State and nation but for the future world we hope will come with peace."

It is a long stride from the St. Paul Festival of Nations to the surcharged sessions of the Security Council. One may legitimately doubt that the first will have much immediate effect on the second. The essential difference, of course, is that in the festival people meet and mingle *as people,* whereas in the sittings of a world peace organization they come together as nations. In the festival all diverse groups acknoweldge a common sovereignty. When each group — or each nation—insists upon its own sovereignty, the premium is on diversity rather than unity.

The real significance of the festival, and the effort at understanding which it represents, lies in its implications for our national life. Masses of people separated by oceans, frontiers and the haunting fear of atomic bombs cannot be brought physically together; for them peace and mutual understanding hang by the fragile thread of their political leaders' wisdom. But Americans in cities and towns and rural communities do have to live together, surmount the frictions and irritations of daily contact together, raise their children and earn their bread together. The turbulent currents of racial prejudice that seethe below the surface in America today suggest how far we yet must go in learning the art of living at peace within our own borders.

MISS SICKELS would be the first to acknowledge that a successful stunt like the Festival of Nations is only a pebble on the beach. For those who want to prevent racial and religious cleavages from atomizing society, she has other suggestions. First, she points out, one can know the facts: know that a Negro is not, after all, a member of an inferior race, know that Semitism is the expression of ignorance and insecurity, not of objective fact. Next, one can get contact and experience in living cultural differences by such projects as a folk arts center, where people of various backgrounds can find common footing in activities of common interest; can participate in an intercultural garden, as in Cleveland; an international park, something like a permanent Festival of Nations; cooperative religious observances, and an interfaith community holiday at Christmas time. As it is, we are devising ways to ignore our primary responsibility: to realize the democratic ideals we profess. While we are devising ways to bring people together, we cannot grow, she suggests. Miss Sickels thinks in terms of standing can flourish only in an atmosphere of freedom from want and equality of opportunity. Mutual understanding can flourish only in an atmosphere of freedom from fear. No projects and promotions, however successful, can substitute for economic and social justice.

9 1946

Slavery's story, told by slaves, makes history alive

LAY MY BURDEN DOWN. A Folk History of Slavery, edited by B. A. Botkin (The University of Chicago Press, $3.50).

P. M. New York

By Jonathan Daniels

Author of A Southerner Discovers the South *and other books.*

IN THIS remarkable book, which brings the past to us in vivid reality and with the human quality of a great novel, B. A. Botkin has brought together materials which make the story of slavery in America both as clear and as complex as the life around us now.

2-3-46

These personal accounts of the old slaves are not history. In no real sense can they be described as folklore. For honest understanding of the past, however, they are probably more important than either. The hard whip swings in recollection, and an affectionate security is remembered. Hate and homesickness are bound up together. And America, in one of its darkest chapters, is reported by its victims in terms which are a good deal more human than doctrinaire.

Mr. Botkin, who was folklore editor of the Federal Writers Project of the WPA which collected the recollections of the old slaves, has done an excellent job in editing this book. With a brief but adequate introduction, he seems to leave the storytellers to themselves. Obviously, he has done a big job in selection, but there is no evidence of any effort to pattern the stories, except to give a sense of wholeness to the remembering. He has wisely kept dialect to a minimum, which makes easy reading of the almost encyclopedic picture of bondage which he presents.

Frolic and suffering

The collection contains long, human narratives of slaves who lived in different states, on different types of plantations and under a variety of good and evil masters. There are short anecdotes of almost every phase of slave life, from frolic and suffering to war and freedom. There are ghost stories and funny ones. The smart slave occasionally outsmarts the master, as Uncle Remus's perhaps allegorical Brer Rabbit often tricked the stronger fox.

All the stereotypes of the familiar reporting of slavery emerge in the book: the good mistress, the master's yellow girl, the mean overseer and the po' white patroller, the slave stealers and slave traders, the Negro drivers, the workers in the underground railroad, the pickaninnies, cotton pickers, coon dogs and bloodhounds. But there is a convincing freshness about the same persons in these old folks' tales which makes them seem not characters, but human beings. The good reality of men and times remembered runs richly through the whole.

My own judgment is that these old Negroes, muttering their memories to young WPA reporters, did a better job of re-creating a vivid picture of the "peculiar institution" than any of the historians or novelists have done.

2-3-46

Vivid memories

From these memories, no modern reader, judging the institution by conditions in his own times, can fail to be appalled by the incredible indignity and cruelty which it entailed. But it is important to remember that these old people are re-creating a past to which they belonged and which they found both good and bad.

All the stories together, those of the slaves with the good masters and those with bad ones, achieve a wholeness and an honesty which hardly any formal, scholarly writing about slavery has possessed. At the same time, the memories often bring a vividness which the best fiction writers have not surpassed.

It was cruel:

"Master gits a bottle whiskey and a box cigars and have Tom tied up out in the yard. He takes a chair and say to the driver, 'Boy, take him down, 250 licks this time.' Then he'd count the licks. When they's 150 licks, it didn't look like they is any place left to hit, but Master say, 'Finish him up,'

2-3-46

"Then he and the driver sot down, smoke cigars and drink whiskey, and Master tell Tom how he must mind he master. Then he lock Tom up in a log house, and Master tell all the niggers if they give him anything to eat he'll skin 'em alive.

"The old folks slips Tom bread and meat. When he gits out, he's gone to the woods 'gain. They's plenty niggers what stayed in the woods till surrender."

In memory, it could also seem good. There were, of course, good masters and mistresses. But the very number of the pleasant memories seems surprising. Certainly no skilled romanticist has made a pleasanter picture of life on the old plantation than the one Charley Williams, slave in Louisiana, remembered in Tulsa, Okla., when he was 94:

"It wasn't very fancy at the big house but it was mighty pretty just the same, with the gray moss hanging from the big trees, and the cool green grass all over the yard, and I can shut my old eyes and see it just like it was before the war come along and bust it up.

"I can see Old Master setting out under a big tree, smoking one of his long cheroots his tobacco nigger made by hand, and fanning hisself with his big wide hat another nigger platted outen young inside corn shucks for him, and I can hear him holler at a big bunch of white geeses what's gitting in his flower beds and see 'em string off behind the old gander toward the big road.

"When the day begin to crack, the whole plantation break out with all kinds of noises, and you could tell what going on by the kind of noise you hear.

"Come the daybreak you hear the guinea fowls start potracking down at the edge of the woods lot, and then the roosters all start up round the barn, and the ducks finally wake up and jine in. You can smell the sowbelly frying down at the cabins in the Row, to go with the hoecake and the buttermilk.

2-3-46

"Then pretty soon the wind rise a little, and you can hear a old bell donging way on some plantation a mile or two off, and then more bells at other places and maybe a horn, and pretty soon yonder go Old Master's old ram horn with a long toot and then some short toots, and here come the overseer down the row of cabins, hollering right and left, and picking the ham outen his teeth with a long shiny goosequill pick.

Franz Boas vs. Hitler

RACE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. By Franz Boas. 219 pp. New York: J. J. Augustin. $2.50.

New York Times

By R. L. DUFFUS

2/8/46

PROF. FRANZ BOAS may be popularly remembered as the man who taught that there was no such thing as a "pure" race, except in certain cases where inbreeding had been carried to extremes, and that above all there was no such thing as a pure-bred modern nation. Franz Boas began answering Hitler before Hitler was born. During a professional career of sixty years he answered the little Hitlers and a good many men who would be shocked to learn that they were following in Hitler's tracks—the anti-Semites, those who showed their own ignorance by proclaiming that the structure of the Negro's brain doomed all men of color to lasting inferiority, those who preached the Nordic myth or the Anglo-Saxon myth, those who shuddered at the "Yellow Peril," and all those who bolstered their pride or their pocketbooks by classifying the races of men, with their own breed, of course, at the top.

2-10-46

Some anthropologists may have put more emphasis on heredity and less on environment than Professor Boas did. That quarrel may go on forever. But Boas was not an extremist who ignored everything that precedes birth. He did not deny the evidence of

Negro Booklet Is Informative

Richmond Times, Va. Dispatch—Sun.

LUTHER PORTER JACKSON, Ph. D., professor of history at Virginia State College in Petersburg, is the author of a pamphlet on "Negro Officeholders in Virginia, 1865-1895" which has been published under the auspices of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Washington.

3-10-46

The booklet is a sort of Who's Who of Negroes who were elected to offices in Virginia, with emphasis placed on the members elected to the convention and the General Assembly.

They are listed alphabetically by name, and such information as education, property-holdings, skill and whether or not each was born slave or born free is included in the biographical sketches.

THE material presented runs from 1904 to 1942. It reveals the consistency of a mind which was continually enriching itself with new data and continually growing, yet which was early fixed around certain general principles. democracy; and of demonstrating evalism. He saw the danger and the scientific falsity of much of strove with the valor of his wis- our thinking and of many of our dom to overcome it. The fruits prejudices." His modesty made are here. him doubt the value of the mate- rial his son wished to bring to- gether in a book, but his sense of obligation to a wider public won him over. Before his death he reviewed and approved what is published here and edited twelve of the thirty-three selections.

2-10-46

HE died in 1942, at the age of 84. He was not vindictive enough to take pleasure in such spectacles as the Nuremberg trial, yet it does seem a pity that he could not have known of that pitiful exhibition of the tawdriness as well as the evil of the system that he had many common ances- rested on the Nordic myth. It tors. But it was the effects of and social environment intermixture and environment his later years, as his son, Dr. that interested him most. He established scientifically what is reasonably apparent to any observer—that differences among the individuals of what is popularly considered a race are always far greater than any differences between one race and another.

Beginning his career as an anthropologist with a study of the Eskimo, he proceeded to the study of primitive man ("The Mind of Primitive Man," 1911) and, by a logical development, to an attempt to understand the biological background of man- kind in general. At some point in progression, perhaps at a early point, the curiosity of scientist was supplemented by a warm desire to help and interest extended from the subject of race to that of other groupings, and from that to the differences among men, in the shape of the head, in pigmentation, in details of anatomy. He recognized the three true races of Europe, and some outside. Moreover, he paid great attention to inherited traits in families and in isolated groups whose members had many common ancestors. But it was the effects of intermixture and environment that interested him most. He established scientifically what is reasonably apparent to any good observer—that differences among the individuals of what is popularly considered a race are always far greater than any differences between one race and another. our culture, and the roots of twisted to produce a new medi-

general problems of democratic society. He stood passionately for the freedom of the teacher whenever it was threatened—during World War I and later. At the same time he realized the limitations of the intellectuals, had faith in the final wisdom of the masses and saw that democracy must fail unless this mass wisdom was armed with knowledge. 2-10-46

He would never have been at ease in a tight socialist society—certainly not in Communist Russia, but when equality of opportunity could be had only by state intervention he would have had the state intervene. He set a high standard when he defined democracy as a condition "in which civil liberties have been attained, where not only thought is free, but where every one has the right to express his opinions, where censorship is shunned, where the actions of the individual are not restricted as long as they do not interfere with the freedom and welfare of his fellow citizens." He was full of years when he died, and yet one reads these pages feeling that he died too young. One would like to hear his wise and kindly voice in this sub-atomic world.

Negro History Week Bulletin Sold Out

Demands were so great for the special Negro History Week Bulletin published by the International Workers Order that 5,000 copies were exhausted in two days.

However, many features observing Negro History week are published in the IWO's monthly Fraternal Outlook, February issue. These include a statement by Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace, and articles by IWO Negro leaders, Mrs. Louise Thompson Patterson of Chicago and Sam Patterson of New York.

Additional features are by Dr. Paul B. Cornely of the Physicians Forum and Howard University, and Albert E. Kahn, co-author of The Great Conspiracy. 2-12-46

THE HORIZON

By P. L. PRATTIS

If Rayford Logan Isn't Careful, He May Become Some Kind of a Saint

LONG after most of us are gone, the future natives of the dependent areas of the world, particularly the black natives, may find themselves paying tribute, amounting to sanctification, to a small freckled-faced man who, during his lifetime, went without too much honor and too much song in his own country.

The probable saint to unborn blacks of a new era is Rayford Whittinghant Logan. To those who demur and aver that Dr. Logan looks and acts like anything but a saint, agreement is easily vouchsafed—with the footnote that few of us know what the recognized saints of today looked like, nor how they acted, in yesteryear. Some of them were rather gay blades as long as they were able to be. Dr. Logan will be honored because he will have distinguished himself in a certain type of service of concrete meaning and value to countless millions of human beings. It will have become known in these future years that he made of himself the watchdog of the welfare of the peoples of the dependent areas of the world and that of all the men in the world at the time he led all the rest in knowledge and understanding of how the welfare of these peoples was being affected by economic, social and political forces loose in the world at the time he lived.

Mr. Prattis

All this is by way of calling your attention to Dr. Logan's latest book, "The Senate and the Versailles Mandate System," published for two dollars by the Minorities Publishers, 1519 Jackson Street, N. E., Washington, D. C.

* * *

SOMEWHERE between World War I and World War II, the curiosity and interest of Dr. Logan were excited by the provocative intransigence of imperialism and the plight of the natives of dependent areas throughout the world. He was particularly lured by the operations of the so-called Mandate System, created by Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant for the disposal of the colonial and near-colonial possessions of the former German and Turkish Empires.

Needled by Woodrow Wilson, the artificers at Paris in 1919 labored and came up with some fine-sounding words about self-government, consent of the governed and independence. To Dr. Logan, the proof of a word pudding has always been in the nature of the condiments used. "How is this thing seasoned?" he has always asked. The savour, or real value, is in the seasoning, so far as he is concerned. This attitude, of course, makes him something of a cynic. It makes him turn up his nose at some very FINE-LOOKING puddings.

It is apparent now that he has never trusted Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant. Nor has he been sure of the seasoning in the other rhetorical concoctions of Woodrow Wilson. He knows for a fact, in the light of what has happened during the past twenty-five years, that the words used at Paris meant exactly nothing.

"The Senate and the Versailles Mandate System" is a first small effort on the part of Dr. Logan to prove for the record that the words used in the Covenant were not honestly intended, by the Allied imperial powers nor the United States. Between the backs of this book, he has placed in a showcase window all the principal arguments and comment about Article 22 which was heard in the United States Senate in the fateful years when the League of Nations was being born. Most of this argument and comment was hostile to darker peoples and derogatory. There was no considerable sentiment in the United States Senate at that time for freedom of the peoples of any dependent areas. 1-25-46

DR. LOGAN is digging all this matter up because he is just about as cynical of San Francisco as of Paris. He sees the same word pudding at San Francisco and the same lack of proper seasoning. He doesn't want the natives of dependent areas to be deceived this time, nor the other freedom-loving people in the world. He is not going to allow himself to be deceived. He has elected, practically alone, to stand guard against political mandacity directed toward these areas. He works in a field where there are few, if any, experts outside himself. No one else has had the heart to devote himself to full truth on this subject. That is why, in the light of the books Dr. Logan is writing, he may come to be known as the only scholar of our day who wrote down the whole truth and nothing else about political legerdemain and dependent areas.

Creoles and Carpetbags

BRAVE MARDI GRAS. By W. Adolphe Roberts. 318 pp. New York: Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill Company. $2.75.

A CURIOUS blend of romanticism and realism, of beauty and blight, comprises this historical novel set in New Orleans in the Civil War years: from January, 1861, when the story opens with gala preparations for the annual Mardi Gras, to the autumn of 1865, as the carpetbaggers move in to begin their sinister occupation. 2-10-46

Between these dates the author has set down a hard-bitten tale of how the war affects a family of proud Creoles, plantation owners and descendants of French aristocrats. Within a frame of magnolia and jasmine, he uses his quill as rapier: ardently in defense of the Confederate cause, while with equal skill he dissects the brutality of certain Yankees, particularly "Beast Butler"—when that notorious Yankee general established his military rule in New Orleans in 1862 and made himself forever famous by issuing his barbaric "Woman Order."

Mr. Roberts embellishes his framework of war with engrossing material. His description of the Mardi Gras is beguiling; so are his scenes in the old French Quarter—the *salle d'escrime* of a noted mulatto fencing master, and Madame Crusol's elegant bordello on Toulouse Street. And a fast-paced plot thickens when the beautiful heroine, employed as a spy, is sent to Richmond with secret messages for President Jefferson Davis.

At times Mr. Roberts is a somewhat baffling writer. And his characterization leaves something to be desired. It isn't that his proud ladies and gentlemen are composed of rodomontade (to use one of his more specious words). Rather, they are little Fauntleroys grown up.

MARGUERITE TAZELAAR.

Africa's Key to the Freedoms

MY AFRICA. By Mbonu Ojike. 350 pp. New York: The John Day Company. $3.75. 3-24-46

MBONU OJIKE describes his birthplace in southeast Nigeria, West Africa, as settled "some ten thousand years ago" by the Arochuku, "people of God," nomads who drifted across the Sahara to the coast. These Arochuku, or Aro people, "may have been the ancestors of the Pharaohs. Who can tell?" he suggests. "By their political genius they continued to reach into many parts of Nigeria, sometimes by military expeditions and sometimes through economic and political penetration." They were slave-traders, he adds, as late as 1901, when they were suppressed by the British. 3-24-46

Mr. Ojike has experienced the impact of two widely different cultures. "When my father was making his last effort to prohibit my going to school," he appealed to the ancestors, and "swore by Ofo," the family god, to no avail. He relates that his father "married as many as ten wives" and had nineteen sons and thirty-one daughters, a story that cannot be told adequately "in a paragraph." The father never became a Christian and was a slave-owner. "Unfortunately, his first slave, called Onuegbu, was in his late years struck with leprosy. My father did not throw him out. Instead, he built the leper a home beside the compound, and his wife and children were given a new home from which they went to care for him.

It is the humanity in the book, the sorrows and strivings that move us to suspend judgment on its author's inflated accounts of

Book On Veteran 761st Off Press

TEISENDORF, Germany—"Come Out Fighting," a handsomely bound 153-page book, on the veteran 761st Tank Battalion, first Negro composed armored unit ever to enter battle in the American Army, written by Trezzvant W. Anderson, 705 East Ninth street, Charlotte, N. C., came off the presses today, in Salzburg, Austria. 2-9-46

First copies of the book have been forwarded to President Truman, Secretary of War Patterson, General Eisenhower, and other high ranking Army officers who took interest in the 761st.

Public libraries in many large cities, and university libraries throughout the U. S. are also receiving copies of the story of the Army's first Negro armored unit to engage an enemy of this country. 2-9-46

New Book Tells Story Of Voodoo In New Orleans

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—(SNS)—VOODOO, with its famous queens and witch doctors and its orgies and weird ceremonies, is the subject of the book VOODOO IN NEW ORLEANS, by Robert Tallant, published last week by the Macmillan Company. New York Mr. Tallant lives in New Orleans. He has been working over a period of years on the history of Voodooism and much of the information given in his book came from conversations he had with Negroes and white members of the sect. 4-19-46

held at City Auditorium last week. Thousands of visitors were attracted to the huge drawing which was hung in the section devoted to "World View of the Negro." The map, executed by artist Halo Woodruff, furnished much of the geographical background for books

Population Map

ATLANTA—(ANP)—An impres sionistic map, showing the dis tribution of the world's 210,000,00 Negroes in sovereign states, col onies, and as minorities within nations, was the most arresting feature of the Atlanta Book Fair map.

Tops Book Fair

about Negroes which were on dis play. Five bibliographies of books on Negroes were prepared and dis tributed as supplements to the

9 1946

Voodoo at First Hand

VOODOO IN NEW ORLEANS. By Robert Tallant. 247 pp. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

By NASH K. BURGER

HAVING trouble with your landlord? Don't bother the OPA; just burn twelve blue candles in a barrel half full of sand, and all will be well. To break up a love affair mix gunpowder, mud from a wasp nest, flaxseed, cayenne pepper, BB shots, filé, bluestone and dragon's blood (these last two can be bought from any reputable Voodoo) and throw on the steps of the person you want to be rid of. Or, you need a salary increase? A Voodoo will sell you some Boss Fix powder warranted to make the boss come across in a hurry.

Robert Tallant has explored the mysteries of Voodoo in New Orleans—from its first manifestations, in slavery times, as a primitive, obscene African religion, to the present. Today, Voodoo doctors and Voodoo churches, under one guise or another, may be found in the Negro sections of every American city—and powder and materials to "fix" friends or enemies and control events are advertised in newspapers and displayed for sale in drug-store windows.

Since the time of Lafcadio Hearn and George W. Cable, Voodoo has intrigued the attention of New Orleans writers. Hearn even lived in the house of a Voodoo queen. While in recent years the dark, ineluctable secrets of New Orleans Voodoo have become almost as well known as New Orleans coffee, New Orleans gumbo, and Andrew Jackson Higgins. Mr. Tallant, however, speaks with authority. He is a Voodoo himself, having once been picked up and whirled around in the proper fashion by a Voodoo named Rooster, as part of an initiation ceremony involving, among other things, pictures of saints, colored candles, orris root, ginger snaps, gin and raspberry soda.

Like most tall tales, Voodoo becomes more impressive the farther it is removed from the cold light of the present. The classic leaders of Voodoo from the last century dwarf the petty operators of today. The greatest of all were Marie Laveau and her daughter with the same name who, between them, dominated New Orleans Voodoo for nearly 100 years. Whites and Negroes alike sought the aid of the Laveaus in matters amorous, legal and political, and attended the lurid rites that the Laveaus staged on St. John's Eve. Then, there were Prince Basile, who bewitched a Creole beauty away from her wealthy husband; Pappa Felix, whose rites included skinning a black cat with his teeth; Doctor John, who claimed to be a Senegalese prince and to have fifteen wives, one of them white; and scores of other major and minor Voodoo practitioners.

There is a certain monotony about the charms, the gruesome legends, the *gris-gris* with their goofer dust, dried toads and human bones, and even the Voodoo ceremonies themselves with their blood and eroticisms. But it is a fact that the *gris-gris* still appear; Voodoo may have become a racket, but it yet lives. And it is not Negroes alone who respect the cult and seek its help.

Pullman Porters' History Written

ATLANTA.—"The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters," a record of one of the most interesting labor organizations in the United States, has just come off the press. It was written by Dr. Brailsford

DR. B. R. BRAZEAL

R. Brazeal, professor of economics at Morehouse College, and has been published by Harper and Brothers. The graphic drawing on the cover of the book is by the famous painter, Hale Woodruff.

In 258 pages, the book relates vividly the struggle of the colored American to secure recognition in the world of organized labor. It tells the story of the beginnings, growth and present activities of the Pullman Porters' union.

"Our World" Makes Bow

Two outstanding events in the history of Negro journalism occurred this week with the publication of the first issue of **Our World**, a monthly feature and picture magazine, published by John P. Davis; and the appearance of a four-color

MARVEL COOKE, one of the ten best newspaper men and women, according to the poll in this month's "Color."

magazine **Color**, of which John Louis Clark is managing editor.

Our World went on the newsstands throughout the country on March 5. Among its items, besides lively current news articles and features, are departments on child care, food, beauty and women's styles. It also has a teen-age and veteran's department.

Color is not a new magazine, but its current issue is printed in four colors, something new in Negro magazine publication. Edited by I. J. K. Wells of West Virginia, the current issue features, among other subjects, a poll on the country's ten leading Negro all-around newspaper editors. Among them are Mrs. Marvel Cooke, assistant managing editor of PV and John Louis Clark, former city editor.

Dixie Justice

STRAW IN THE SOUTH WIND. By Donald Joseph. 297 pp. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

THE theme of racial hatred has proved a stumbling block to many a well-intentioned author. Donald Joseph, one-time French professor at the University of Texas, has explored its dramatic possibilities in this novel, but underestimated its inherent dangers. Once again we meet a Southern lady who strives to procure justice at home—this time, for a Negress accused of murdering her white lover. The Negress (a pretty woman who is "almost white") is ostracized by Negroes as well as the whites, and thus has no one to befriend her until the prominent wife of Judge De Vere risks the town's displeasure in her behalf.

The book presents the anomaly of an overcrowded canvas with the net effect of thinness. We are offered a lynching, mob melodrama, clandestine love affairs, two suicides and the complete shattering and reorganization of an established home. But sketchy treatment and a lack of inner progression keep the book from coming alive; as is so often the case, minor characters have more reality than the principals. A 6-year-old boy, Brett, in particular, is a likable youngster whose childish irrelevancies inject a little sanity into the sentimental vagaries of his elders.

BARBARA HERMAN.

Boysi Himself

BY GLENN ALLAN

If you haven't already met lovable Boysi in the pages of the Saturday Evening Post, you've a new treat in store for you! In the pleasant, slightly mad Oates household Boysi is king of the kitchen—seated on a throne as shaky as a dish of jello. Boysi's penchant for getting himself (and the Oates family) into scrapes is topped only by his knack for pulling the fat out of the fire just when all seems lost.

How Boysi took a hand in selecting Miss Alice's husband, and later piloted her twins to baby-parade victory . . . how he traded in the family's conservative car for a "yellow cha'iot" more to his own taste . . . how he saved "the boss" from the clutches of the widow next door — these and many more exploits make rich, rib-tickling reading.

Here's gay, heart warming relief from strikes, atomic bombs and reconversion —in the company of one of the most lovable characters in current fiction.

Just published

At All Bookstores

$2.50

Samuel Curl, Inc.

70 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 11, N. Y.

"The Negro" Enters 4th Year With Great Anniversary Edition

If you're interested in glamour, there's a very interesting article in the April issue of "The Negro" now on local newsstands. This article is entitled "Glamourous Women of the Bible" and is written by Winifred Van Duzer.

The Negro is a monthly publication containing reviews, news and digests of many and varied articles pertaining to "the tenth" man. It covers the whole gamut of interest from sports to scholarly dissertations, and makes good reading for the other group, also.

In the April issue, for instance, there is a well written easily understood article entitled "Louis or Conn"? in which the expert Louis Bromberg, analyzes previous Joe Louis fights in anticipation of the coming championship battle scheduled for June 19. There's also an interesting forum on the subject, "Can Marriage Between Persons Belonging to Races of Different Color Bring Happiness?" A writer from Virginia and one from Chicago express exactly opposite viewpoints.

The housing shortage is reflected in "No Homes for Vets."

Race Relations

A Biography of the Southern United States.

MACMILLAN plans for publication in May an important

Howard W. Odum, director of the Institute for Research in Social Science, University of North Carolina.

Negro health and mortality rates are exposed in "How Sick is the South?" Along line, there's an article entitled "The Right of the three Rs, and the growing Spirit of inter-racial understanding" is well college professor in "I'm Asham- d to Tell Him." One of the most articles in this very interesting at honest reporting.

review of Black Metropolis," publication is a comprehensive review and Cayton's much book about Chicago. This ed by Dr. Ezra Mr. Ezra faculty of Stowe Teacher's College, Negroes who con-lege.

Dr. Bond was named on the tant book by one of the South's s Honor Roll leading sociologists on problems groes for the of race relations and the conflicting attitudes of North and South. The book will bear the title, "The Wall of the South—

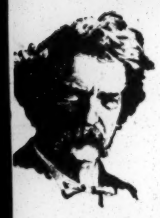
The heights of American achievement

in the stories of seventeen Americans whose lives, linked together, make a national saga from the opening of the West through the second World War.

New York Times, N.Y.

Mark Twain • Justice Holmes • Thomas Edison • Luther Burbank • Booker T. Washington • Theodore Roosevelt Woodrow Wilson • Jane Addams • John Dewey • Louis Brandeis • George Washington Carver • Henry Ford Helen Keller • Will Rogers • Herbert Hoover • Franklin D. Roosevelt • Wendell Willkie

Sun 4-7-46



These are stories written to remind Americans of greatness which has walked in their midst, and to show what the people of the United States are like; or what a few at least have been like, and millions of others wish to God they might be like.

AMERICANS

A BOOK OF LIVES

By Hermann Hagedorn

With pen-and-ink portraits by RAFAEL PALACIOS *and others.*

A John Day 20th Anniversary Book

$5.00

Dr. Lincoln's Dilemma

New York Times, N.Y.

THE INTRUDERS. By Robert Bright. 306 pp. New York: Doubleday & Co. $2.50.

THE dramatic events in this novel arise out of the gradual revelation that a distinguished young surgeon has been keeping secret his Negro ancestry. But this is no public drama; it is confined to a small and closed group of rather special persons who surround the central figure, Dr. Robert Lincoln. Sun 4-7-46

Old Dr. Theron Wilmot, doddering about in a kind of benevolent austerity, wanting to make Lincoln a partner in his clinic, looking upon him almost as a son; Dr. Shelby Gayle, the old man's nephew, a thick, brutal fool, murderously jealous of Lincoln's professional success; Dr. Emil Vadso, refugee, cynic, Mephistophelean agent of Lincoln's downfall; Erika Vadso, his daughter, ardently, idealistically in love with Lincoln; and Sheila Frederick, depraved glamour girl, who alone has written evidence of Lincoln's secret—these are the five persons who intrude upon the life of the central character, bringing about his bloody death.

That death should have been shocking, and its implications meaningful. But Lincoln is little more than a gangling, rather pathetic person whose torments are not so much shared with the reader as they are pointed out to him. Nor are "The Intruders" believable: with the exception of Wilmot and Gayle, what they do seldom suggests any general, ordinary, normal human activity.

Wrappings of subtle analysis swathe the action, at times impeding its forward motion. There is a good deal of agony, sensuality and highly intensified self-awareness. One feels at moments that the material of the book is somehow private, somehow restricted to the experience of this particular odd group. And because it is material which should be of larger importance one faintly rebels against that strange, almost cliquish sense of restriction. Sun 4-7-46

Readers of Robert Bright's earlier novel, "The Life and Death of Little Jo," will not find here the lovely charm which distinguished that book. But they may recognize in the delicate texture and the often brilliant phrasing of "The Intruders" the author's unquestionable—but here somewhat tormented—talent. R. S.

The End of F. Jasmine Addams

4-1-46

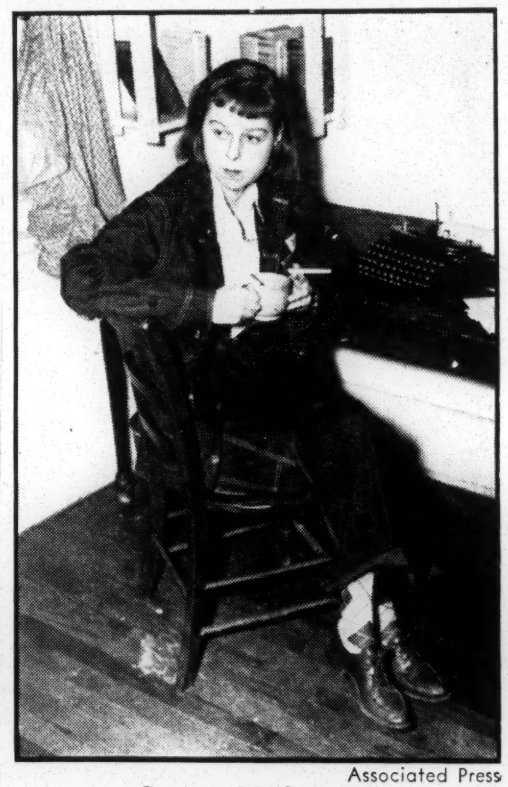
THE MEMBER OF THE WEDDING—Carson McCullers—Houghton Mifflin ($2.50). Time Magazine

In the sultry Georgia kitchen, Berenice Sadie Brown, the Negro cook, was dealing greasy cards. Berenice, an experienced woman, had had four husbands. One of her eyes was made of blue glass (husband No. 4 in a fit of temper had gouged out the original). John Henry West, who was six years old, "watched all of the cards very carefully, because he was in debt; he owed Berenice more than five million dollars." Frankie Addams, who was nearly 13, sat with her eyes closed and wondered how on earth she could convince Berenice and the rest of the world that her real name was F. Jasmine Addams, Esq.

Frankie is the pawky, gawky heroine of Carson McCullers' slim (195-page) new novel—she calls it a novella. Unlike Novelist McCullers' earlier books (*The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter, Reflections in a Golden Eye*), which were well filled with the complex, morbid relationships of adults, *The Member of the Wedding* is a serious attempt to recapture that elusive moment when childhood melts into adolescence. The result is often touching, always strictly limited by the small scope of its small characters. Like childhood, it is full of incident but devoid of a clear plot; always working its way ahead, but always doubling back on itself; two-faced, two-minded. The soiled elbows of Frankie, the brat, keep showing below the sleeves of the orange satin bridal dress which F. Jasmine Addams, Esq. wears to her older brother's wedding. 4-1-46

Frankie found that adolescence is one of the loneliest of human experiences. John Henry was too much of a kid to help her much. Berenice Brown was too much of an adult. When Berenice talked—her stationary blue eye still fixed on the evening paper, and her active brown eye roving around the room—adult life was fascinating but bafflingly ambiguous. According to Berenice, a man might wake up one morning and find to his surprise that he was "to all intents and purposes" a woman. And even if people stayed the way they were, their actions remained incomprehensible. "I have knew mens," said Berenice, "to fall in love with girls so ugly that you wonder if their eyes is straight. . . . I have knew womens to love veritable Satans and thank Jesus when they put their split hooves over the threshold." Nevertheless, Berenice decided: "What you ought to begin thinking about is a beau. . . . A nice little white boy beau." "What would I do with one?" demanded F. Jasmine. "Do, Foolish? Why, make him treat you to the picture show. For one thing." 4-1-46

But the last, long-drawn-out day of Frankie's childhood is highlighted not by a picture show, but by one of the few dramatic incidents in the novel—Frankie's narrow escape from a drunken soldier. The rest of *The Member of the Wedding* is devoted to an uncertain child's private meanderings through a stewing hot summer day, when the old ways and excitements have ceased to have meaning, and the most familiar streets and houses have lost their familiar look; when the ear catches nothing but sounds that are incomplete, and the eye is deceived by apparent glimpses of things that do not really exist. The culminating point of all



Associated Press

CARSON MCCULLERS
The crisis was hymeneal.

this—the hysterical excitement that surrounds her brother's wedding and her vain attempt to run away from home—merely marks the dividing line between awkward F. Jasmine Addams, Esq., and the poised young high-school student named Frances Addams, who smiles condescendingly at old Berenice, and murmurs: "I am just mad about Michelangelo."

A Novel About Jim Crow

Daily Worker

New York N.Y.

TRUMPET TO THE WORLD, by Mark Harris, published by Reynal & Hitchcock. $2.50.

By STEPHEN PEABODY

MARK HARRIS, the young author of this novel of white man's inhumanity to black man, tells in a brief autobiographical note of his feeling that the Negro is "the victim of fantastic injustice," a conviction that was borne home through his observations as a member of the armed forces. This is an excellent conviction to possess, but of itself it is not enough to support a novel. Convictions must be exploited and analyzed, and their implications worked out before they can be put down on paper; otherwise they lack verisimilitude, and, in the case of this book, organic connection with life. Mr. Harris is passionate, all right, but his passion is all heat and very little light. Thurs. 5-16-46

Willie Jim, Mr. Harris' hero, is scarcely typical of the Negro people and their problems, except in his background of poverty and oppression. Taken under the wing of Eddie Mae, the well-to-do daughter of a white Southerner, Willie Jim overcomes the handicaps of poverty and illiteracy to become a powerful writer against injustice to his people. He marries Eddie Mae and shortly before their son is born he goes into the Army, where he again becomes the victim of Jimcrow hate. As the novel ends, Willie Jim is AWOL, with his wife and child, in New York, and his publisher's lawyers are getting ready to fight his case.

Developing his story, Mr. Harris has some harsh and bitter and true things to say about Negro-white relations in the United States. The shame of Jimcrow, the mockery of segregation in a democratic country, the degregation of human values in enforced inequality. All these and more corrode the conscience of America, and it is important to shout about them and to get angry about them. But anger, to be effective, must be intelligent and informed anger, not blind ranting.

Mistakes Superficialities For Fundamentals

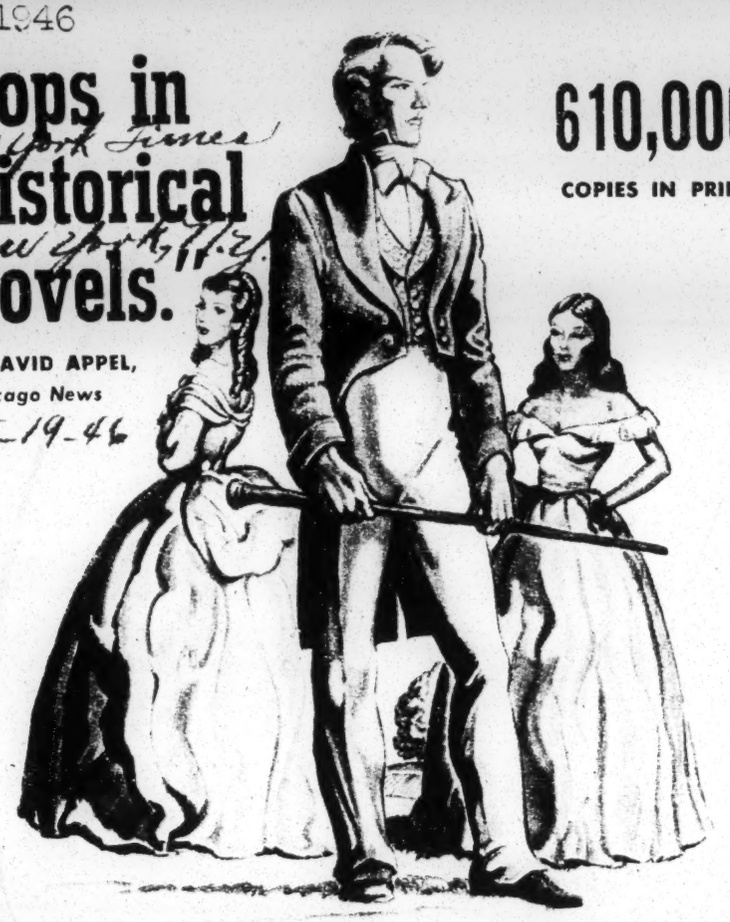
Thurs. 5-16-46

Therein lies the chief weakness of **Trumpet to the World.** Mr. Harris sees the superficials of Negro-white relationships, and mistakes them for the fundamentals. William Jim is black and conscious of it, Eddie May is white and wants to sublimate her color in love for her husband. The chief hurdle to understanding evolves as a color hurdle and a racial barrier. True, these are important considerations underlying oppression of the Negro, but they gain their significance as they are part of a broader national problem. It is, therefore, misleading to pose Negro-white

Issues solely in terms of race and question is not simply justice for a member of an oppressed nationality. color as Mr. Harris does. The a man who is black, but demo-

1946

"Tops in historical novels."
—DAVID APPEL, Chicago News
5-19-46



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INTO "the wickedest city in the world"—New Orleans in 1825 — came *Stephen Fox*, armed with a $10 gold piece, a pearl stickpin, and a dream. With the skill and daring of the card-sharp he was, he gambled and won . . . and built "Harrow", the greatest plantation in slave-ridden, castebound Louisiana.

This is the story of the adventurer who became an aristocrat; of *Odalie*, who became his unwilling wife; *Aurore*, who was content to bide her time; the lovely quadroon *Desirée*, who suffered all things to be near him; and *Inch*, the slave who became a master and had more than one score to settle with the Foxes of Harrow.

JONATHAN DANIELS: "Good, honest, headlong romance which will hold any reader who can tolerate beautiful women and brave, baffled men." — *Book-of-the-Month Club News*

The **FOXES** *of* **HARROW**
5-19-46

A novel by **FRANK YERBY**

At all bookstores, $3.00

THE DIAL PRESS, NEW YORK

GOVERNMENT AND LABOR IN EARLY AMERICA. By Richard B. Morris. 557 pp. New York: Columbia University Press. $6.75.

By JOHN A. KROUT

NOTHING in the history of the American people more surely compels our admiration than the achievements of those European and African emigrants who conquered the wilderness of eastern North America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There never seemed to be enough men and women to do the work that needed to be done.

It is easily understandable that during these colonial years the subject of manpower should be constantly on men's lips. How could new workers be secured? How could the available labor supply be used to achieve maximum production? What controls were necessary?

These and similar questions provide the starting point for Professor Morris in his forthright investigation of the relation between business and labor, and the influence of Government on both. He reminds us, "the entrepreneur was not free to carry on his business as he saw fit, nor was the worker free to withhold his labor or to demand any working conditions he wished."

The reader who is disturbed by present difficulties in adjusting the relations of management, labor and Government will be quick to sense the parallel between the system of Government controls elaborated in the course of the second World War and that which existed during the American Revolution. He will be eager to find in the earlier period the texts for the arguments which he desires to use either in supporting or in attacking the present controls. Such misuse of historical analogy can only add to the noise and confusion of the moment. Of this danger Professor Morris is fully aware. He faces the problem with candor; and he handles it adroitly.

AFTER setting the early labor codes against the appropriate background of those general economic controls which flourished under English mercantilism, Professor Morris fixes his attention upon the colonial entrepreneur and the colonial worker, observing both as they react to the numerous, and at times complicated, restraints imposed by Government.

It is conservatively estimated that at least half of the total white immigration to English America came as bound labor. Prior to the middle of the eighteenth century these "servants" —ranging from "free-will redemptioners" to transported convicts—contributed far more than the Negro slaves toward the physical task of building the thirteen colonies. Their status, therefore, bulks large in Professor Morris' volume; but his most original commentary relates to the legal and social position of free white labor. Here the reader gets a clearer picture of the colonist earning his livelihood

Willie Jim's Utopia

TRUMPET TO THE WORLD. By Mark Harris. 242 pp. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. $2.50.

By C. V. TERRY

AT this late date it goes without saying that the dilemma of our American Negro enclave is among our most pressing problems: the present novel is a purposeful addition to the long shelf of books that have attacked that problem recently, with no holds barred and no quarter asked. Mr. Harris is a young poet and newspaper man who has, obviously, explored his subject deeply: the book was written during the author's Army service and much of its indignation springs from what he saw and heard in that interval. "Trumpet to the World" will repay a careful reading. Many will find its point of view extreme—but there is no denying its sincerity.

Mr. Harris believes in absolute equality among all Americans and makes no bones about it. His hero is a young Negro writer, who raises himself from a Georgia mudsill to the best-seller class; his heroine is a white Southern aristocrat (blessed with an income), who gives Willie Jim a lift in her convertible, tucks him away in her ancestral home, teaches him to read and to think for himself. Later she flees to Greenwich Village to have their child. There, with understanding friends, she waits for him to serve out his time in the armed forces—when they will resume their union.

JUST what Mr. Harris intends to prove by all this is not clear. Certainly, he has made no real attempt to explore the individual problem he has created. Eddie Mae's money insulates her from consequences from start to finish: in fact, she drops out of the picture almost completely when the author's spotlight swings with Willie Jim and probes the inequities suffered by the Negro soldier in Army camps. Even here the insulation plays a part: Willie Jim has only to send a wire to New York, and money, or a lawyer, appears on the next page to bail him out of scrapes—including, one gathers, the beating he gives a white martinet in the concluding chapter.

Perhaps the answer is to be found in the book that Willie Jim finally publishes—made up of letters addressed to his infant son, and visioning the America he hopes all Americans will unite to build some day:

They bought the book one man had written and read the story of his life; men read it, too, on ships at sea, on Army cots, by light that filtered through mosquito netting on a sweltering Pacific island, and they were nearer home, near to a scene they knew.

Willie Jim's book would be translated and men would read, digest his words, in the language of another people, and they, too, would look to Georgia in a place called America. They would wonder that this strange story was written in the land that sang freedom.

LYDIA LAMBERT

Pushkin Life Embroidered Just Enough

By W. G. Rogers

Pushkin—Poet and Lover, by Lydia Lambert, translated from the French by Willard R. Trask (Doubleday; $2.75).

Author of "Ruslan and Ludmila," "Eugene Onegin," "Boris Godunov" and other unforgettable pages which lift him, this author says, to the rank of Russia's "first, her greatest poet," Pushkin lived during the first of the nineteenth century.

He was the great-grandson of a coal-black Ethiopian who had won the favor of Peter the Great. He himself enjoyed a less happy status with Peter's successors, Alexander and Nicholas, who let him write but rarely let him publish. Inspired by the French Revolution, he was sympathetic with the Decembrists, and chance alone spared him the exile or execution which they suffered.

Born in a family of rank but not riches, he was taught French instead of the Russian in which he was to write imperishable works. He was educated in the lyceum founded by Alexander at Tsarskoe Selo.

During student days the ardent boy had his first love affair, with an actress. By his own count, which is probably reliable, he had 111 more before he was married to Natalya Goncharov, a beauty who became the toast of St. Petersburg and the czar's favorite. The very charms which ravished Pushkin led, however, to his death.

This is biography fictionalized a little but not too much. As Miss Lambert understands, the bare facts make drama enough. This

A NEGRO SOLDIER'S CREED

A NEGRO'S FAITH IN AMERICA, by Spencer Logan. Published by the Macmillan Company; 88 pages, $1.75.

A "little book" about a large subject seems unwarranted unless it presents one fairly poetic thesis that requires more of art than

Sgt. Logan believes that the practice of fighting discrimination through the courts, by proving it legally wrong, is also wide of the mark. Here he permits himself an unfair dictum on those who work through such channels: "Their activities in the cause of social justice become primarily a means of satisfying their shattered self-esteem." How can one thus dismiss Walter White, leader of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who has accomplished much through seeking respect for the law? He has secured a great part of the "good will" the author desires to be developed. 6-1-46

One paragraph merits quoting in its entirety, for it is the realist's answer to Gunnar Myrdal's theory of the circular character of worse, or better, race relations: "The Negro should not hesitate to take the first step. Important as it is to the white race and to the future of American democracy that white America develop a tolerant attitude toward the Negro, it is of even greater importance to the Negro. Therefore, realist that he is, he should recognize to the fullest his own responsibilities in the matter and should train himself to give up the momentary satisfaction of expressing his age-old resentment for the sake of a greater ultimate reward."

The author suggests that, in asking for democracy for Negroes, Negro America is un-American, since this is class pleading. That kind of argument, though perhaps ultimately true, would seem to leave Negroes with no course to follow. Is all organization un-American? Is it wrong to ask the Negro to foster pride among his own people? Perhaps we need most of all a "little book" on the nature of democratic action.—MARY ELLEN CRANE.

ALL ABOUT LABOR UNIONS

THE TRUTH ABOUT UNIONS, by Leo Huberman. Published by Pamphlet Press; 87 pages, $1. Brampton News

This is intended to be a handbook on organized labor in the United States. As such it is a revealing book. It shows how little the average American knows about a subject on which he is likely to have the most pronounced opinions. Interestingly enough, this book will tell many union members what they do not know at present. In short, Huberman, who has long been regarded as an authority on trade unionism, has undertaken to tell the truth for the benefit of everybody concerned, which really means for the benefit of the whole country. Sat. 3-22-46

The author does not pretend to the objectivity of a scientist. He is openly on the union side, and he gives his reason as follows: "Workers, unorganized, are weak. Workers, organized, are strong. That's why workers join unions. There are no ifs, maybes or buts about this. It's fact. Employers know it. Experienced workers know it. And the Supreme Court of the United States knows it." You have in this passage an illustration of Huberman's simple, straightforward style. You have also a glimpse of his conception of democracy. Unions are in his opinion an essential part of the scheme of a working democracy.

He does not hesitate to go into details. He takes little for granted. He describes collective bargaining, the structures of unions, the difference between craft and industrial unions, the special character of railroad brotherhoods. He does not steer clear of thorny questions like jurisdictional disputes, the closed shop, even feather-bedding and racketeering. The reader may not agree with his conclusions, but he cannot doubt the author's grasp of his subject and his profound desire to present facts as facts. That is the "truth" which the American public needs in order to see its way more clearly through the fog of ignorance, propaganda and discomfort.

Huberman has been accused of being fonder of the CIO than of the AFL. That may be true. He is tough with the latter. He is not, let it be understood, an undiscriminating worshipper of organized labor. He criticizes where he thinks criticism is deserved, and that goes where the CIO is concerned as well as the AFL. He is no devil's advocate. But he is eager that trade unionism be seen as a democratic force, whatever else may be said about it. And he does not want public opinion in this country to set itself against unions for reasons which cannot be justified in terms of fair play or a fair chance. He wants to protect a great principle, even though it is not always properly expressed. ala

This little primer should be read by every American who prefers being just to enjoying the glow of thinking he is right without reference to any other consideration. It should also be read by intelligent members of unions, for the flaws pointed out by Huberman cannot be eliminated until the rank and file goes into action on a higher level than has usually prevailed in the past. Reynal & Hitchcock, the publishing firm behind the Pamphlet Press, is not only up-to-the-minute in getting out this illuminating brochure, it is rendering an invaluable public service.—R. E. A.

CALDWELL NODS

News

A HOUSE IN THE UPLANDS, by Erskine Caldwell. Published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc.; 238 pages, $2.50.

What a pity for an author to forget his art! There is no laughter, force or appeal in "A House in the Uplands." There is only bitterness and anger. Erskine Caldwell has described the broken-down, poor-white aristocracy with no care and little grace. Perhaps he was not really interested in saying what he has to say with much vigor. The book reads as if it were written in a hurried, offhand way—to get it off the author's mind. Sat.

The dominant character, Grady Dunbar, is not convincing. He is said to be charming, but there is no evidence of his charm. He is a plantation owner, at one time rich but never respected. Having spent most of his time gambling away the last of his estate, he comes home only to recuperate from drinking. He continually ignores his wife, who adores him—for a reason never given. Grady is neither funny nor pathetic; the reader cannot hate him, for he is only a bully. The reader cannot react to Grady with any emotion—and yet Grady is the dominant character in the book! The dying-out of the Dunbars is the theme of Caldwell's novel. And it is with relief that the reader bids farewell to these arrogant souls. Birmingham Ala.

The action of the novel is perfect for a three-act play, if someone would rewrite the lines. In a conversation with Grady, the defiant son of the overseer says: "What do you mean by that?" Grady says: "I mean what it sounds like. You're not as dumb as you look. You know what I mean." "I don't have to answer that." "You will if I say so." Surely this dialogue prevents the reader from becoming absorbed in Mr. Caldwell's characters. Lucyanne, the wife, is weak. She is filled with shame and disgust when she discovers Grady is involved with one of the mulatto servant girls; however, her disgust does not overcome her love for Grady. After being treated with no tenderness or consideration by her mother-in-law and her husband, she hasn't the strength to escape. 6-8-46

Mr. Caldwell has failed to pick a poignant problem for his book. Two themes are introduced, neither dealt with very thoroughly. Surely the first is not much of an issue; there are very few sadistic ex-aristocrats who are able to hold their Negroes without pay! The gangster owner of a gambling den who has corrupted the law of the town is worth much more attention. If Mr. Caldwell continues to denounce the South, perhaps he would do well to use a form other than fiction. A constructive article might be received with more sympathy. If he continues as a novelist, let us hope he will make his next book more entertaining than "A House in the Uplands."—A. D. S. Sat.

Seaver wants Caldwell to stick to comedy

A HOUSE IN THE UPLANDS. A novel by Erskine Caldwell (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, $2.50).

By Edwin Seaver

Novelist, critic and editor of Cross Section, *an annual collection of new American writing.*

THE mask that becomes Erskine Caldwell best is the comic. When he dons the trappings of tragedy he is less convincing. This is not to deny that there are tragic elements in his comic works: there are such elements in all significant comedy. But his comedies have breadth and stature: they imply horizons far beyond Tobacco Road. Above all, they are uniquely the vision of Erskine Caldwell.

On the other hand, when he essays the purely tragic theme, as in this new novel, *A House in the Uplands,* he is apt to give us merely a tight little drama, a good enough story in itself, perhaps, but of small proportions and of no great ultimate worth.

The pattern of *A House in the Uplands* is one that has by now become familiar in our novels of the South. It is a pattern of barrenness and cruelty and frustration, of decayed aristocracy and poor white tenant farmers and Negroes held in bondage.

Grady Dunbar, the hero of Caldwell's novel, is a moral, mental and material bankrupt: he is finished before the story begins. "Grady's father and grandfather had never had to count the cost of anything their hearts desired, but their good fortune had become Grady's misfortune. While inheriting their spendthrift manner of living, he had also fallen heir to depleted and eroded cotton fields and cut-over timber lands. By the time he was 20, the plantation was losing money instead of making it, and so, year by year, he had mortgaged a portion of it in order to obtain spending money."

Poor, impotent Grady

Grady throws away the last of his substance in drinking and gambling. He is as impotent to stay the push of disaster as he is to make love to his wife. His empty hatred and brutality are only so much self-loathing, and when, in the end, he is killed by a gangster's bullet for failure to pay a gambling debt, it is only another form of committing suicide. Lum 5-5-46

What Caldwell has in *A House in the Uplands* is the outline of a considerable and tragic novel of the South, but not much more than an outline. Grady Dunbar is not a tragic figure. There is no fatal flaw in his character: he is all flaw, and he only becomes a tragic figure when we fill in the background from our own knowledge of the web in which he is caught.

Lucyanne, his wife, is even less fully created, while Brad, the tenant farmer's boy who is supposed to love her, is only a shadow, too. There is the same thin treatment of Grady's aristocratic mother and of Ben, Grady's brother, who was so considerate and unselfish, "so much unlike a Dunbar that he had often been called the black sheep of the family."

It is curious that Caldwell's comic characters should be so fully dimensional and his tragic characters so, shall we say, linear.

With such real gifts as a storyteller and so much real knowledge of his people, why should Caldwell be content to give us a novel of such small scope as *A House in the Uplands?* One has only to think, for instance, of what Thomas Hardy would have done with an equivalent theme—how richly plotted, fully peopled and deeply characterized the result would have been.

Afraid or incapable?

You do not know whether Caldwell is afraid to suffer life in its magnitude or is incapable of doing so—whether he is unaware of what it takes to be a major novelist or is merely indifferent. Obviously, you do not ask such questions of a run-of-the-mill writer. You ask them only of an important writer such as Caldwell, and you ask them in fear lest he fall into the familiar pattern of so many American writers, the pattern of arrested development.

Meanwhile, the unique qualities of Caldwell remain. His marvelous ear, for instance, for the way his people talk. (Would that he talked as well himself in his expository and descriptive passages!)

Finally, there is a wonderful, boys-in-the-backroom chapter in the book, with the political boss of the county and his cronies playing poker in the judicial chambers while Ben is trying to get a word in edgewise about his brother's troubles.

This is pure Caldwell: it is Caldwell at his unique, orneriest best.

'Must' for Readers

Book Exposes Racial Strife

Pittsburgh Pa.

ST. PAUL, Minn.—In commenting on the recent book by Alice L. Sickles, "Around The World In Saint Paul" (University of Minn. Press, $3), Louis Adamic said, "This is 'must' reading for all who are seriously concerned with the racial and cultural problems churning inside America." Sat 4.20.46

That was written during the war, when the local scene was less in our thoughts than the scene overseas; when we had temporarily forgotten the race or creed of the

BRIGHT APRIL. By Marguerite de Angeli. With illustrations by the author. 88 pp. New York: Doubleday & Co. $2.50.

THIS book is a disappointment to one who loved "Henner's Lydia" and "Thee, Hannah!" It has reached April. She has a nor- portant. Marguerite de Angeli is supremely ity and vitality.

When the little whi

April Bright is a 9-year-old too suddenly, cha

Negro girl. Although her father, victions April

older brother and sister have happy.

been "put upon" because of their To point at a

race, only a whiff of intolerance sometimes makes i

changes her con- pictures, like the story, lack real-

P. F.

9 1946

The Dream, and the Responsibility, of Democracy

REVEILLE FOR RADICALS. By Saul D. Alinsky. 228 pp. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. $2.50.

By EDMUND DE S. BRUNNER

THE message of this book is that the American Dream is real and achievable. Mr. Alinsky is a passionate believer in democracy. The thesis of the book is that the implementation of American democratic ideals can be achieved by People's Organizations, built from among the people themselves and so built because "the masses are the substance of society."

To Mr. Alinsky the real radical works at the business of democracy, with and not for the people. "People are the stuff that makes up the dream of democracy"; democracy can be achieved only by and through them. He wants large doses of the radicalism of the founding fathers injected into the blood stream of our nation.

But this book is no mere fervid, futile plea for a revival of democracy. He proposes a device, the People's Organization, by which we can rebuild a functioning democracy. It is to be based on the agencies and leaders indigenous in each locality. These organizations use the well-known fact that no matter how disadvantaged an area, there are persons living within it to whom from 20 to 40 families look for advice, leadership, often help. They seek to enlist these persons, whether truck drivers, elevator operators, priests or ward-heelers. They wisely discover these tiny springs of power and harness them to the business of democracy. They build an organization concerned with the day-by-day problems of the people, from among the people themselves. Professionals are admitted if they live among those they serve, but the organization itself is a grass roots movement.

The book ends with a suggested By-Laws for a People's Organization, but, as the author himself says, democracy is not just form and structure, "real democracy is as disorderly as life itself. It grows, expands, changes to meet the needs of the people." Therefore two-thirds of the book is given to discussing the building of people's organizations, their programs, native leadership, their tactics, and their educational activities. There is an excellent chapter on the psychology of mass organization. The generalizations are keen, often stinging. Never do they depart from the basic philosophy of a rugged, courageous, achieving democracy. Moreover, they flow from a liberal use of case illustrations, many lengthy, all taken from the records of existing People's Organizations. Here is superb evidence that democracy works in these neighborhoods and communities, even though most of them are on "the other side of the tracks."

"Democracy . . . Must Be Worked at Unceasingly."

THE People's Organizations are not afraid of conflict. They view it "as the fire under the boiler of democracy." They seek to use it constructively, to bring the opposing viewpoints into the open. Decisions are then made on the basis of the general welfare, of democratic principles.

There will be some who will squirm because of the tactics People's Organizations have occasionally used in conflicts, but it must be added that they are gentler than some that have been employed against them. The People's Organizations have been in some real fights. Gangsters and hoodlums have been hired to stop them. Their opposition has included some of the most feared power blocs in American cities. Thus far the People's Organizations have yet to taste defeat. They have attacked race prejudice and discrimination, poor housing and bad health conditions, economic insecurity and strike breaking.

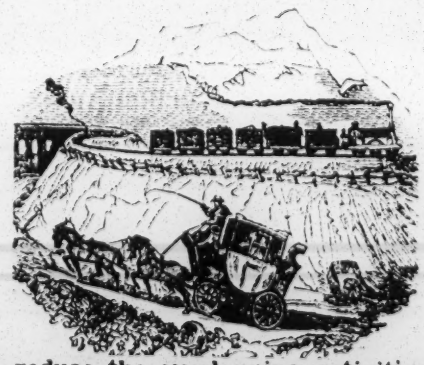
A sound principle, constantly emphasized, is that the community, the people and their needs and problems must be seen as a whole. Life is not segmented, it is a web. Poor housing and delinquency are related, both may be rooted to a degree in low wages or political corruption.

The People's Organization is not shocked by human selfishness. It uses it. Two competitors join up, not because they believe in democracy, but because neither wishes the other to gain the advantage of seeming more interested in the community and its affairs. Once in, they begin to discover people as people, not only as customers. Once committed to democratic operation, their old selves are trapped. The motives subversive to democracy do not bear careful scrutiny from an aroused community, for democracy has mighty compulsions within itself once it begins to operate.

MR. ALINSKY'S strictures on many labor leaders, taken out of their context, would delight a Pegler. They, like all liberals, "are unable to see beyond their own bailiwick." They speak for a clique. The People's Organization speaks as American citizens. Yet Mr. Alinsky would tie the People's Organization largely to labor. Perhaps that is because in its six years the movement has remained wholly urban and because the masses of the people are those who labor. But democracy is at work on the farms beyond the other side of the tracks. One cannot but think of the groups in a thousand or more rural counties that began by planning land use and ended by planning the kind of life they wanted for themselves and their children, with concern about schools, churches, youth, recreation, prices and many other things. The rural situation is simpler than the urban, but these rural groups have been longer at work.

If this book were wholly devoted to an account of the People's Organizations, this omission could be overlooked. But the experience of these organizations is presented as a way of salvation for America. This being so, it is important to recognize that the necessary structural forms to accomplish this end may vary considerably. These variations should be relatively unimportant. They will fit the varying circumstances of the people involved. What is important is that such democratically motivated groups should cooperate. This problem is not mentioned. Though the case illustrations show that the plan is not a capsule panacea, this lack of awareness of other democratic forces is a distinct limitation.

APPARENTLY Mr. Alinsky rules out all other forms of coordinated effort. He calls for a new organization on the ground that all others have failed. True, many Community Councils have become merely well-meaning agencies that simply arrange to



reduce the overlapping activities of their constituent members. But not all can be so described. The question arises as to whether in many situations the spirit and techniques Mr. Alinsky proposes could not be infused successfully into existing agencies. This might save time, energy, even wasteful conflict.

MR. ALINSKY also assumes that as the movement spreads the leadership will remain democratic, free of institutional arthritis, and continue unselfish in its use of its growing power. He assumes also that the supply of "radicals" will be adequate to lead and organize an enlarging movement. These assumptions may prove true. Only time will tell.

The important and heartening message of the book is that people have learned both their worth and their power in cooperation. They have learned that human beings can be respected and respect themselves only in a democracy. This lesson the reviewer believes to be needed today. Democracy languishes and dies unless its citizens accept responsibility for its well-being; it is something that must be worked at unceasingly. Our nation must realize this as it stands doubting and fearful on the threshold of the post-war world. America did not become great through fear. Mr. Alinsky calls on us to take courage and make democracy work. This is his reveille for radicals.

Books of the Times

By CHARLES POORE

"THE BELEAGUERED CITY"* is a "Reveille in Washington" of the Confederacy. Just as Margaret Leech's book, published a few months before we went into this war, told the story of life in the Union capital during the Civil War years, so Alfred Hoyt Bill's "The Beleaguered City," published today, tells the story of life in Richmond, the Confederate capital, during the same years. And like "Reveille in Washington," it is filled with parallels for our own strange time.

Alfred H. Bill

Mr. Bill writes informal history with easy fluency. He has been a lifelong student of the Civil War, having since boyhood collected material about it and he has ransacked the newspapers and the diaries of those days as well as many other books and documents to find the thousand revealing details that bring the past to life. He is himself a Yankee from up-State New York, which may lead John Hutchens and other followers of Stuart to view his writing with a beady eye; but then, in extenuation, it gests, "is hardly an oversimplification might be pleaded that Gibbon was not, after all, an ancient Roman.

South's Courage Emphasized

There is no difficulty that has confronted us during the last four years in this country, Mr. Bill believes, that didn't beset the Confederate Government and people—and they had many more besides. It is the South's steadfastness that as the movement spreads the leadership will remain democratic, free of institutional arthritis, and continue unselfish in its use of its growing power. He assumes also that the supply of "radicals" will be adequate to lead and organize an enlarging movement. These assumptions may prove true. Only time will tell.

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The whole Civil War, in Mr. Bill's view, pivoted not fall.'" And when it fell, when it stood, Troy could in the old Greek story, 'while it stood, Richmond. To say that the war consisted ated in days of flame and pillage that are mov- and courage he wants to emphasize; "if it should of the attack and defense of Richmond, he sug- ingly described toward the end of this book, the seem to the reader that undue prominence has

been given to their shortcomings and those of their Government," he would like it remembered that the South's triumphs over shortcomings was part of their achievement. He might have added that the shortcomings of the North in that same period have not been exactly overlooked by history. 1-17-46

As prelude "The Beleaguered City" opens with the July day in 1858 when Monroe's remains were brought home to Virginia after lying for many years in a New York grave. The ceremonies in Richmond—which then had a population of less than 38,000, a population that was to triple in the course of the war—were attended with expressions of indivisible loyalty between the North and the South. Then Mr. Bill surveys the events and elements leading up to the war, including a singularly oblique view of slavery.

The soldiers of the South and the Government employes were soon swamping Richmond. The soldiers' uniforms, at that time, were something to see; all the colors of the rainbow; a few years later survivors might be ragged or barefoot, but still full of fight. Lee went quietly to work, performing his miracles in the face of staggering obstacles, and the other great leaders appear, in victory and in defeat, in life and in death.

And after the battles, fought very near at hand, the wounded would appear, swamping the hospitals, where often they got desperately little care, though the women of Richmond worked day and night. With the wounded came waves of prisoners, who got far better care at the beginning than they did at the end. 1-17-46

There was an astonishing amount of classified military information in the papers, which circulated into enemy territory; there was free and uncontrolled criticism of military leaders and President Davis and his Government. In spite of the North's blockade, ships brought some supplies and almost priceless black market luxuries through. Until almost the end there was the hope of victory, and continual rumors of uprisings in the North. There were spies all over the place, and "letter-carriers" who would smuggle letters to Washington or New York for a fat fee.

Thread at $5 a Spool

Early in the war butter sold for a while at a dollar a pound. Toward the end, a spool of cotton thread cost $5; in one regiment in the Richmond-Petersburg area only fifteen men had shoes; a furnished room—if you could find it—rented for $100 to $110 a month. The day came when an officer who paid $200 for a pair of boots didn't want the change from a $500 bill.

At the beginning of the last year gold was quoted at $100 in Confederate money for one in gold. In March, flour cost $1,500 a barrel. It was estimated that six Confederate soldiers were getting about as much to eat as one Northern soldier. But they fought on.

If modern misery wants ancient company, many contemporary cities of our Allies overseas can find it in this book. The heroic resistance of Richmond, the valor of her heroes, the desperation of the refugees, the agonies of the wounded and their bereaved families, the brutal callousness of the profiteers and the black marketeers, the bungling and ineptitude and skullduggery in official circles, the feeling of dancing on the edge of the grave, the feasting of the haves and the hunger of the have-nots, the fantastically inflated currency, the life of endless, overpowering strain—the whole litany of what human beings can endure—has too many parallels today. 1-17-46

This was civil war. True. And civil war is the most tragic kind of war. But it's probably time mankind grew up and got some sense and realized that all war between human beings is civil war.

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*THE BELEAGUERED CITY: Richmond, 1861-65. By Alfred Hoyt Bill. Illustrated with maps and pictures. 313 pages. Knopf. $3.

TRAGEDY IN HARLEM

THE ROBBED HEART, by Clifton Cuthbert. Published by L. B. Fisher; 219 pages, $2.50. Birmingham, News, Alabama

The strange fruit of interracial romance once again forms the basis of a popular novel. This time the locale is Park Avenue and Harlem and not the cotton fields of Georgia. Nevertheless, the result is virtually the same, making clear, however, in the process of the story's development the truth that racial strife is not essentially a Southern problem. This novel is also notable because of its thorough delineation of Negro jazz and its revelation of Harlem's social structure. "The Robbed Heart" presents an illumination of dark streets and alleys long neglected.

Denis Sloane, only son of an aristocratic Park Avenue family, has attained recognition as a critic of jazz. His work carries him to the haunts of Harlem's famed Negro swingmasters. Through his writing and his influence, he is of great assistance to them, and eventually they constitute his circle of friends. One of his most genuine companions is Bert, unusual trumpet-player, who has a spark of genius, but is held back from big-time because of marijuana, excessive drinking and the lack of necessary breaks. Bert's girl-friend, Frances, is an excellent characterization of an uneducated, not-too-scrupulous female of the species, deadly and determined. Sat 2-23-46

Denis meets and falls in love with Judy Foster, glamorous, cultured daughter of a West Indian Negro family. At first he thinks she is white, but does not object when he discovers his mistake. Their romance is brief and beautiful, but the battle against "a more terrible force than any actual law" brings defeat. In a futile argument with his mother, Denis says: "You find it convenient to think of all Negroes as untouchables, acceptable only as menials. It has never been necessary or convenient or even possible for you to think of a Negro as a person or a friend. A good part of my generation has other ideas."

The protests of Judy's parents are equally strong. Aristocrats in their own right, they have brought up their daughter according to high educational and strict moral standards. In her love for Denis, Judy faces, consequently, the scorn of her parents, the derision of Negroes in a lower social level who had always considered her snobbish, and the natural rejection of the white community. Her life, which had previously been serene, becomes the focal point for emotional and physical strife, reaching a sudden climax.

Clifton Cuthbert does no crusading. His theme is well integrated with the characters and background. His philosophy is pointed. For instance, in the midst of a Harlem race riot, Denis says: "Not merely social change was in the process of taking place, but several antagonistic systems of values were contending for the control of man's spirit. . . . In a time like this, the human reason hastens to devise a private scheme of life, creating not only an equilibrium for itself in place of the one which society should give it, but for its own disorders, so much more tractable than that of the world."—CHARLES WHITE McGEHEE.

Rights and Duties In a Democracy

Summary & Guide Norfolk Va

By LUTHER P. JACKSON

"Negro Officeholders In Virginia —" Production of Many People

COMING from the office of the Guide Quality Press of Norfolk this week is a booklet of ninety-five pages under the title: **Negro Officeholders in Virginia, 1865-1895.** I hesitate to call this volume of history my own because so many individuals have helped in supplying the subject matter which it contains. Some works of history can be written by the author examining only the documents which he may find in a library. Others can be written by the author making contact with numbers of persons now living and then searching the documents in public offices and libraries to test the accuracy of the facts which these persons have given.

DR. JACKSON

Negro Officeholders in Virginia was prepared under the latter roundabout method. It is a work in which more than one-hundred persons have contributed something to its authorship and in which more than thirty public offices have been searched. It is a product of cooperative effort and the production of many people. 2-9-46

Throughout the South seventy-five years ago the freedmen were very active in the politics of the Republican party. They attended the conventions, worked in the campaigns, and voted in droves on election day. Usually the candidates for office were white men from the North, but occasionally Negroes won nominations for office and received the highest number of votes on election day.

It was by this process, during a period of twenty-five years in the State of Virginia, that one Negro was elected to Congress, 102 were elected to the state legislature, and several hundred were elected to various city and county offices. The booklet, **Negro Officeholders in Virginia**, tells the story of the fitness of these men for office and what they achieved after getting there.

2-9-46

Practically all of the officeholders are now dead. But the descendants of many of them are still living at the age of fifty or more. Rather old they are, but they are the people who most greatly cherish family papers, keep family Bibles, and preserve scrap books which relate the experiences of their fathers as leaders in politics. And they are, likewise, the people who will most likely correspond with an author, find data for him, and lend a picture of "old dad" even if the picture is life size and has been hanging on the wall of the home for fifty years.

Aside from sons and daughters, there are a number of older Negro citizens in the state today who recall as youngsters the speech-making and campaigning of the legislators. And along with them are some younger persons who will dig up information a plenty. Added to this group are a number of white citizens in the state who will just as readily reveal all they know about the past. Better still, these white Virginians, chiefly court clerks, will search the court records for pertinent information. And like the Negro investigators, they will readily write letters to an author supplying him with the facts which they have spent hours in finding.

Operating under these circumstances my office this time last year bristled with the raw material from which has now come the finished product. It has been a most delightful experience.

In the effort to praise an author, the public sometimes forgets to praise the publisher of a book. Though ever so well written, a volume may never be read unless it is attractive in appearance. In this instance the public must not forget the Guide Quality Press who has given the booklet a beautiful cover, inlaid a picture of the state capitol, and presented fifty pictures of the officeholders. This company certainly has swelled the number who have made this booklet the production of many people.

2-9-46

Another group who has contributed to making this small volume the production of many people are the four-thousand Negro school teachers of Virginia. Indeed it is they who financed the publication. To the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History they have been giving money for a period of ten years. In this the eleventh year they are being rewarded by a "free" copy of this booklet.

With every teacher in the state thus supplied, and with the literature supplied by the Association, every Negro school house in Virginia during Negro History Week should become a beehive for a recital of the achievements of Negro people in the past. Receiving instruction from **Negro Officeholders in Virginia** the youth may be inspired to participate in the affairs of government by becoming voters and officeholders like members of their race in the days of old.

Journal - Guide

'AMERICANS':—"Americans," a book of 17 short biographies including Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver, will be published next month by John Day Company. Hermann Hagedorn authored the work for the East and West Association which conducted a poll on this question: "What modern Americans, typical of the American best, ought to be made better known to the people of other countries?" Any American now living or alive since 1900 was eligible. Norfolk Va.

In addition to Washington and Carver, names finally chosen were: Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain), Oliver Wendell Holmes, Thomas Alva dison, Luther Burbank, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Jane Addams, John Dewey, Louis BranDeis, Henry Ford, Helen Keller, Will Rogers, Herbert Hoover, Wendell Willkie, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

9 1946

Books of the Times

Times Newyork, Ny.

By NASH K. BURGER

THOSE who, in the flood of spring books, missed Hubert Creekmore's "The Fingers of Night"* could do much worse at this season than investigate that honest, moving story of life in rural Mississippi. "The Fingers of Night" is not only a sensitively written account of a young girl and her farmer husband struggling against forces both within and without themselves that seem insuperable, but also a novel that portrays understandingly aspects of Southern life that most need understanding. Considered from either point of view—the general or the particular — the book has interest and a more than passing significance.

Hubert Creekmore

Tessie Ellard is beset by the prejudices, the stubbornness, the fanaticism of her father and the class he represents. She is the victim of her own fear, ignorance and weakness. She is no ideal heroine, surely; but her helplessness, her fumbling efforts to escape (first, from a hopeless environment through her relations with the farm-boy, Claence, and later from the consequences of that relationship) inevitably create sympathy and affection. And in the end, after a fashion, she conquers both her environment and her own weakness—but at great cost.

Monday 7-29-46

A Story Told Without Distortion

Mr. Creekmore presents his story perfectly naturally, without distortion. There is here none of the decay or abnormality of Faulkner, none of the grotesque literary cartooning of Erskine Caldwell. Tessie and Claence are an ordinary, rural boy and girl caught in a tragedy only partly of their own making. Tessie is the dominant figure, but behind her mistakes is her father, and behind him forces of stupidity, cruelty and violence. These two young people are the scapegoats for the misdeeds of a society, their story an American tragedy. 7-29-46

Tessie's mistakes are her own, but their origin is to be found elsewhere. Her clandestine meetings with Claence are the result of her father's repressive influence at home. Yet Mr. Creekmore does not fall into the rather common modern error of completely justifying waywardness in terms of environment. This point is clearly worked out in the episodes of the novel, episodes so selected as to have a symbolical significance as well. Tessie turns for help in avoiding the consequences of her actions to a doctor (science), a Negro's conjuring (superstition), to another white girl (her own community), but finds there is no escape, no help outside herself.

Yet she is herself not wise enough, not strong enough, at first, to take this lesson completely to heart. She is unable to rise above her old fears, her old habits of mind and action, to achieve the release that should come after she marries Claence. As a result she falls into an error more grievous than her earlier one. This time, almost too late, she is able, because of the suffering she has known and her own individual, fundamentally sound vision and good sense, to "tear away the strangle-hold on her spirit, that, like the fingers of a smothering night, had dragged her through the darkness of fear and guilt." And for her guilt she is willing to make atonement. It is thus a moral story that Mr. Creekmore is telling.

7-29 He Monday

His Setting Seems Authentic

Basically the setting for this novel could have been any place in the world. It happens to have been Mississippi, where Mr. Creekmore grew up, and he has made excellent use of the particular elements from that locale which fit the generalities of his story. Among these particularizations the figure of Tessie's father looms large. The reader may feel (as did this reader) that Eben Ellard's fanaticism is a mite overdrawn, but still accept him as the symbol of the blindness, complacency and cruelty that are characteristic of some elements (sometimes, it seems, rather considerable elements) in the Southern scene—and elsewhere too, be it said. New York, Ny.

This stubborn attachment to false values, unreasoning, inbred, is most marked, of course, in the attitude on race. Eben Ellard's bigotry is religious, and that is not unknown in the South, but the racial prejudices of the ignorant Southern white are in the book, too. A Negro is about to be lynched for a crime that Tessie has committed. Claence grasps eagerly at this possibility, "If they'll lynch that nigger man, it'll be all right." Perhaps the very exaggeration that is to be observed in the characterization of Eben Ellard is a mark of the anger with which Mr. Creekmore observes the callousness and inhumanity of the Ellards of the world. Times

In addition to a forthright grappling with the Southern problem of racial and religious prejudice, the novel, generally, faces up to the problems of the Mississippi sharecropper and small farmer. Mr. Creekmore knows how his people live, what they wear, what they eat. The idiom, the colloquialisms are right, and the dialogue achieves a simple dignity and forcefulness.

Only a writer who knows and loves his people and the South could have written the passage in which Tessie and Claence drive in their wagon (the gift of Claence's father) along a Mississippi road on what was the nearest thing to a honeymoon they were ever to know. And only a writer who loves the South and knows and hates the forces that are unworthy of it could have drawn the vastly evil portrait of Eben Ellard.

*THE FINGERS OF NIGHT. By Hubert Creekmore. 208 pp. D. Appleton-Century Company. $2.75.

BOOK ON JOE LOUIS TO BE READY BY JUNE

Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK — Due on June 1947, a new autobiography of Joe Louis will be published by Duell, Sloan and Pearce, Walter Winchell reported in his daily columr last week. Sat. 7-27-46

For Equal Opportunity

The Times Book Review

COLOR AND CONSCIENCE. The Irrepressible Conflict. By Buell G. Gallagher. 244 pp. New York: Harper & Brothers. $2.50. New York, N.Y.

By GEORGE STREATOR

Sunday 7-29-46

MR. GALLAGHER demands throughout this book — "from Jerusalem to Cleveland"— an "unrelenting, unremitting, kindly but insistent and indefatigable struggle" for equal and unrestricted opportunity for peoples of all races and colors. The arguments in "Color and Conscience" are directed to the Christian church, in an effort "to bring the tangled problems of color caste under the scrutiny of an unsentimental ethical religion." The author was for ten years president of Talladega, a liberal arts college for Negros in Alabama. (He has already published "American Caste and the Negro College.") He declares his fitness for his task as critic in view of these experiences and by reason of his youth in the Dakotas, Montana and Minnesota, his college training and church work in the New York City area, and his present assignment in California, where he is Professor of Christian Ethics at the Pacific School of Religion. 9-29-46

"Slavery as ownership of chattel is gone: as a caste system, it remains," he writes. "Its purpose is to keep non-whites in a position which, in one way or another, is inferior or subordinate to that of whites. Its devices range from lynchings and mob violence, at one extreme, through legal enactment and extra-legal manipulations of courts and police, to custom and etiquette as instruments of caste control." If the Caucasian (outnumbered by non-whites two to one) maintains the position "that the white man's floor is the Negro's ceiling," the Caucasian is then living in "a fool's paradise," since the colored peoples of the world "will endure white domination as long as it is physically necessary to do so, and not one moment longer."

The separation between Christianity and the African and Asiatic peoples is an old one, he argues, dating back to the Emperor Constantine. Dr. Gallagher links this great schism between the Church and "the established peoples" of the ancient world, with the war of State and Church against the Moors in Old Spain, the conquests of the Americas by Catholic and Protestant despoilers of native peoples, and the lack of respect for peoples of color by Europeans generally. The world approaches another "hour of decision," he maintains. "Color caste now rules. If the Caucasian, who holds the power, does not decide to end that rule by his own act of volition, he automatically decides to let the crisis move to its own climax. There is no third possibility."

The political future of the world will be determined by Russia and the Union of North America, "two colossi astride the Eastern and Western Hemispheres." If we choose to be an enemy, "we had best be a strong one"; if a friend, "a good one." But, in either case, "*we have no choice but to abandon color caste.*" (Italics his.)

Dr. Gallagher calls upon Christendom to go beyond "bold speaking, resolving and talking," since "we know what we ought to do." "If we fail to try," he declares, "we are exposed as the hypocrites we shall have become—permitting moralizing to take the place of moral action. If we try, and succeed, we bring the whole family of God within the circle of brotherhood. That is where we belong."

Color Blind Choice of Book Club Find

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 10-26-46

BALTIMORE

Margaret Halsey's "Color Blind" has been announced as the Book Club Find selection for November.

During the war Miss Halsey worked as a captain of hostesses at the Stage Door Canteen where, for the first time, she was thrown in contact with colored hostesses and soldiers on an equal footing.

Critics everywhere rave about Miss Halsey's book because it argues for social equality now, not next week nor next year.

Answer's Critics

On the question of alleged criminal assault, she says it is not important because it is not statistically impressive; that there cannot be many such crimes committed either by white or colored.

On the question of, "Do you want your daughter to marry a colored man?" Miss Halsey says, "Well, daughter would have to consent, wouldn't she?"

Four Centuries Of Negro Books Are In Largest Private Collection

By W. G. ROGERS
Associated Press Arts Reporter

NEW YORK, Sept. 5—The largest private collection of books by and about American Negroes is believed to be that stocked two-deep on library and hallway shelves in the Gramercy Park home of Arthur B. Spingarn.

Spingarn's purposes doesn't need to be, for he can put his hand on any volume wanted quickly and tell, even before he looks in it, what it's about. Unlike a lot of his books, he reads his books.

The owner estimates that he has 4,000 to 5,000 books and pamphlets. Some 3,000 are American, representing perhaps 90 percent of the total published. Some items often so costly that he was getting discouraged. He turned to York public library's Schomburg collection of books about as well as by Negroes, the Slaughter collection in Washington and collections in Howard University, Oberlin, Duke, North Carolina, Cornell and other institutions.

Spingarn was a collector of 17th century English authors; the field was so immense, however, and the election was so costly that he was forced to be selective in his collecting. He turned to the Negro project, which he had a better chance of carrying through. There's a little vanity in it, he admits.

One wrote a book on atom. One wrote a book on which he is now president.

Other sources include the New

Spingarn was a collector of 17th century English authors; the fields by Negroes, the Slaughter collection in Washington and collections in Howard University, Oberlin, Duke, North Carolina, Cornell and other institutions.

But there's also utility, for every year scholars and students re-on the Negro in music, 1878; another through. Spingarn bought ing a 35-year search in this country and abroad. One owner estimates that he has 4,000 to 5,000 books and pamphlets. Some 3,000 are American, representing perhaps 90 percent of the total published. Some items often so costly that he was getting discouraged. He turned to the Negro project, which he had a better chance of carrying through. There's a little vanity in it, he admits.

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SPINGARN in his library.

There are narratives about slavery, much fiction and verse, some law, medicine and philosophy. The authors are Americans north and south, West Indians, Europeans.

Spingarn's oldest volume is a Juan Latino, published in Granada in 1573. In 1742 comes J. E. J. Capitein with two books, one a "Dissertation on Slavery"; possibly the first paper offered by an African seeking a Europeon degree, it is a defense of slavery.

American items include late 18th century poems by Jupiter Hammon and Phillis Wheatley, our first Negro poets; a file of Frederick Douglass' paper, 1851-6; the first anthology of Negro poetry in the U. S. and, from mid-century on, books by William Wells Brown, first American Negro novelist to make a living at it.

Spingarn encounters problems peculiar to his collection. One is the disappearance of many early pamphlets for the probable reason that Negro homes were not permanent. Another is the fact that many authors are not acknowledged to be Negroes. In Europe the writer's racial origin, as in the case of Dumas, isn't mentioned because it doesn't matter; in this country it isn't mentioned, or didn't used to be, because it does. Charlie Chestnutt, turne-of-the-century novelist, was not described as a Negro by his publisher; other writers have to be identified in roundabout ways, perhaps by discovering their names starred in old directories.

The top price Spingarn has paid is $400 but on other occasions he has picked up the wanted volume dirt-cheap Competition is growing much keener now, he says, partly regretful and partly gratified.

Book Review
New York, N.Y.
Times

"I am a Negro American. All my life I have wanted to be an American"

7-14-46

Thus Spencer Logan begins his book, which tells frankly what one Negro thinks of America. With the perspective that comes from his experiences as a civilian and a soldier, he analyses the handicaps and advantages with which he and other Negros face life in America today. He makes some penetrating observations on the type of leadership which the Negro in this country has had, on the Negro's attitude toward miscegenation, on the Harlems of America, on the Negro soldier. He ardently champions a more democratic way of life for both whites and Negros. $1.75

SPENCER LOGAN was a staff sergeant in the Army, and served in France, Luxemburg, Germany, and the Pacific. His manuscript was selected, from hundreds submitted by members of the armed forces, as first prize winner in non-fiction of the Macmillan Centenary Awards.

Spencer Logan's

A NEGRO'S FAITH IN AMERICA

Distinguished from other novels of the race question by the all-embracing warmth of the author's sympathy, this is "a fine and moving story . . . For once, the white Southerner of character is given fair play by the novelist." —Henry Seidel Canby, *Book-of-the-Month Club News.* 9-8-46 $2.75

c Times Book Review
New York, N.Y.
Sun. 8-8-46

A novel that informs the mind and touches the heart . . . challenging and exalting

Quality

By CID RICKETTS SUMNER

As she got off the train at Liberty Grove, Mississippi, the tweed-suited girl with the curly, light brown hair might have been any college girl home for vacation. She wasn't. She was a graduate nurse. She was also "Pinky", granddaughter of a Negro washerwoman whose earnings had paid for her training. She was also a bride-to-be who had run away from the white doctor who loved her. and had come back to take her place where she "belonged".

Salute Magazine Publishes Story On Georgia Klan

The Constitution
Atlanta, Ga.
Wed. 10-23-46

A four-page story delving behind the sheets of the Ku Klux Klan is featured in the December issue of Salute, civilian counterpart of the Army magazine, Yank.

Author of the story, entitled "Inside Georgia's Klan," is Stetson Kennedy, whose book, "Southern Exposure," is being published. Kennedy points out most Georgians hate the Klan and there are not as many Kluxers as some persons imagine.

However, Kennedy added, "the Klan exercises influence beyond its membership because of its alliance with reactionary politicians." In connection with this charge, Kennedy asserts Gov.-Nominate Talmadge "has never deviated from the Klan line, even though he has never admitted to being a member like that man Bilbo. (Sen. Bilbo, of Mississippi)."

Kennedy also traces Klan connections with similar organizations over the nation.

He asserted Gov.-Nominate Talmadge had requested Dan Duke, Assistant Attorney General who is fighting the Klan, to remain in office in order to imply Talmadge is against the organization. Duke yesterday termed this statement incorrect, declaring he had never been approached by Talmadge or any of his associates asking that he stay on as an Assistant Attorney General.

9 1946

The Big House and the Slave Hut

The Book Review

THE MASTERS AND THE SLAVES. A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization. By Gilberto Freyre. Translated from the Portuguese by Samuel Putnam. 537 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $7.50. New York, N. Y.

By HUBERT HERRING

"Coffee." A Painting by Candido Portinari

GILBERTO FREYRE'S "Casa Grande e Senzala," published in 1933, is a trenchant social analysis of Brazil, and is generally regarded as one of the half-dozen major studies in all Latin America. Its publication in English is a gift of the gods to all who would understand the Brazilian land and people. Its title, literally "The Big House and the Slave Hut," suggests the key to the secret of Brazil's formation. On the one hand, there was the great landholder in his plantation house, exercising a power greater than royal captains or bishops; in the shadow was the slave hut. The interplay between the two set the pattern for the population, its living and dying, its loving and eating, its singing and play. Three chief elements are considered by Mr. Freyre — the Portuguese conqueror, the aboriginal Indian, the imported Negro. Sun. 10-6-46

Freyre's portrait of the Portuguese invader is not pleasant. The Lusitanian he describes as "a Spaniard without the warlike flame or the dramatic orthodoxy of the conquistador * * * An Englishman without the harsh lineaments of the Puritan." He was "the compromiser * * * with no absolute ideals, with no unyielding prejudices." He was adaptable "with greater social plasticity * * * [than] any other European colonizer." His homeland existed "indeterminately between Europe and Africa * * * with the hot and oleous air of Africa mitigating the Germanic harshness of institutions and cultural forms, corrupting the doctrinal and moral rigidity of the medieval church, drawing the bones from Christianity, feudalism, Gothic architecture, canonic discipline, Visigoth law, the Latin tongue."

The Portuguese was "vague and unprecise." Himself with Negro blood, he carried no racial prejudice to the New World. His religion was pliable, it lacked "the dramatic Catholicism of "Castile," it was "a liturgy social rather than religious, softened lyrical Christianity with many phallic and animistic reminiscences of pagan cults." Freyre remarks:

The Portuguese live by making themselves believe that they are powerful and important * * * that they are a great colonial power. * * * Switzerland might go on condensing its milk and Holland making its cheeses, but Portugal continued to stand on tiptoe in an effort to appear to be one of the great European powers.

THE Indians discovered in Brazil were a backward people, with no such claims to distinction as marked Incas and Aztecs. Confronted by the European conqueror, the Brazilian Indian reacted with "almost * * * vegetable sensitiveness * * * withdrawing and shrinking back." The Jesuits protected many Indians against the invaders, introduced them to clothes, effectually cut them off from their old life, without opening the door to a new one. The Indian woman, "principal element of economic and technical worth," adjusted herself to the new order, giving her body freely, producing plentifully. The Indian, as such, all but disappeared, but the mark of the Indian is still clear on the social institutions of Brazil.

The Negro was brought in to do the work which the Indian could not, would not do. "Every Brazilian," writes Freyre, "carries with him on his soul, when not on soul and body alike * * * the shadow, or at least the birthmark, of the aborigine or the Negro." That birthmark is "in our affections, our excessive mimicry, our Catholicism * * * our music, our gait, our speech, our cradle songs." Freyre has no patience with those who belittle the Negro contribution, nor with those who pronounce him inherently inferior.

Nor does he accept the dictum that "the Negro corrupted the sexual life of Brazilian society." The fault, he insists, lay not in the Negro but the system. "There is no slavery without sexual depravity * * * the truth is that it was we who were the sadists, the active element in the corruption of family life; the slave boys and mulatto women were the passive element." He credits the Negro for revealing "a human kindness greater, perhaps, than that of which whites are capable, and a depth of tenderness of which Europeans do not know the like, along with an ardent, voluptuous and contagious mysticism with which the sensitivity, the imagination and the religious feeling of Brazilians have been enriched."

BRAZILIAN economy suffered the burden of imported latifundia; great land holdings multiplied, and still persist. Monoculture, dependent first upon sugar, later upon coffee, explains the malnutrition of Brazilians; this monoculture still prevails.

Diseases, chiefly from Europe, scourged Brazil. Syphilis, the most prevalent. The lords of the Big House carried syphilis to the slave hut; the daughters of slaves passed it back to the young sons of the great. Syphilis became proof of manhood, "a young gentleman * * * would be the butt of jests if he could not show the scars of syphilis." Transmission of the disease was speeded by "the milieu in which Brazilian life began." the milieu "of sexual intoxication." Indian women, then Negro women gave themselves easily. Freyre blames the Portuguese, not the Negro, for the masters were "eager to augment their herds * * * unbridled stallions is what they were." Africa also contributed diseases, notably buboes, so "did Africa take vengeance for the ill treatment she had received from Europe."

"Catholicism," writes Freyre, "was in reality the cement of our unity." Catholic loyalty united Brazilians against all heretics—unconverted Jews, French Calvinists, Reformed Dutch, Protestant English. There was little antagonism to foreigners as such. Once baptized, they were accepted freely. "The Church," says Freyre "was a species of disinfectant chamber at the service of the colony's moral health."

Brazilian Catholicism developed a national character. There was no such clericalism as marked Spanish America, and the Bishop did not hold his own against the lord of the Big House. It was a Catholicism shaped and colored by the Moor, the Indians, the Negro. Notable in the Church's Brazilian record was the work of the Jesuits "admirably firm in their orthodoxy, loyal to their ideals." Their fortified *reducoes* were communities of refuge against Portuguese soldiers; but that system disrupted, Freyre thinks, "the entire rhythm of social life * * * peoples accustomed to a scattered and roaming life are always degraded when concentrated into large communities and forced to adopt an absolutely settled mode of existence." The Jesuits took stern charge of Indian boys: "The * * * Indian lad became the accomplice of the invader in drawing the bones, one after another, from the native culture, in order that the soft portion might be the more readily assimilated to the pattern of Catholic morality and European life." The Times Book Review

The Jesuits formalized the Indian tongue *Tupi-Guarani*, which became "one of the solid bases of Brazilian unity." The two languages, Indian and Portuguese, long persisted side by side; as the Indian language disappeared, it left its mark on the Portuguese of the land, which "lost the bite and hardness of that spoken in [Portugal]: it had been softened into a Portuguese without double r's or double s's—it had become infantile almost, the speech of a child, under the influence of the Jesuits' collaboration with the Indian lad." New York, N. Y.

Freyre's analysis of Brazilian character has a candor seldom found among Latin-American writers. He credits the rough vigor of the pioneers, uncowed by Crown or Church; he sees democratic practice breaking through feudal forms. But he detects a biting sadism which he explains by reference to the sexual mores under which youth was reared. He finds sadism revealed "in that fondness for ordering people about which is characteristic of every Brazilian born and reared in a plantation Big House. He detects it in male attitudes toward woman "so often the helpless victim of the male's domination or abuse. A creature sexually and socially repressed, who lives within the shadow of her father or her husband." Furthermore, "this sadism of the master and the corresponding masochism of the slave * * * makes itself felt throughout our history in * * * the social and political domain * * * in our po-

Southern Tragedy

Strange Fruit, by Lillian Smith. 247 pp. New York: The Southward Press. $2.50.

Reviewed by Donald Joseph

Miss Smith's first novel, "The Southwind" (Macmillan Company, New York, $2.50) is a conscientious portrayal of Southern psychology at the turn of the century. The story deals with a young woman of excellent character and her rather shod dy husband who is a judge. They

Nor can credit publisher for bringing not only this

South and that tragedy has its compensations. If anything he errs on the right side. He did not entirely convince me that the two suicides were logical developments of the characters involved. In order to make self-destruction convincing in a book there must be a minute portrayal of the desires and frustrations of the victim. The reader was given less insight into the suicides than the other main characters. This makes the book dramatically weaker than it should have been. Aside from this, Mr. Joseph is a fine writer. 6-9-46 Sat.

JOSEPHINE SCHUYLER
New York, N. Y.

The Chronicle, Detroit, Mich.

"DEEP RIVER"

This brief book by Howard Thurman probes deeply into the meaning of spirituals and through them shows the deep faith and invincible spirit of the Negro slaves who sang them. Dr. Thurman, who has been appointed to the staff of the University of Iowa for the coming year, has been most recently co-pastor of the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples in San Francisco. Four of the "meditations" included here are addresses delivered at the Fellowship Church. To this material Dr. Thurman has added an introductory chapter on backgrounds of the spirituals. Sat. 8-10-46

The four spirituals which Dr. Thurman analyzes here are "The Blind Man," "Heaven, Heaven," "A Balm In Gilead," and "Deep River." Throughout Dr. Thurman shows the contradiction between the Christian religion and slavery and present day segregation and Jim Crow. He points out that the slaves showed through the spirituals their awareness of this contradiction especially in "Heaven, Heaven" in the lines "But everybody talking 'bout Heaven Ain't going there."

As Dr. Thurman notes: "It is one of the great spiritual problems of Christianity in America that it has tolerated such injustices as between Negroes and Caucasians, for instance, that in this area of human relations its moral imperative has been deeply weakened. It is for this reason that many people all over the world feel that Christianity is weakest when it is brought face to face with the color bar.

"'Deep River' is perhaps the most universal in insight and certainly the most intellectual of all the spirituals," Dr. Thurman writes.

Dr. Thurman has gone beyond most cursory examinations of spirituals to link them with the basic yearnings of the Negro slaves and further to show how even today they express the protests of Negroes against the circumscribed lives they must lead. His writing is clear and direct and his brevity reflects the careful thought behind each address. The book might easily be used as a sort of handbook for discussion groups or classes. It is to be regretted that the price ($2.00) may prohibit its wide circulation. Its length (39 pages) is such that it would lend itself easily to publication as a pamphlet which would insure far greater circulation.

"Deep River" by Howard Thurman; Eucalyptus Press; Mills College; Oakland 13, California; 1946; $2.00.

Alexander Pushkin. A Portrait by P. Konchalovsky.

112 Women, One Bride

The Times Book Review

PUSHKIN: POET AND LOVER. By Lydia Lambert. 276 pp. New York: Doubleday & Co. $2.75.

New York By E. B. GARSIDE N.Y.

PUSHKIN, Russia's first poet, is an ideal subject for biography in Miss Lambert's impressionistic style. He is remembered as the typical romantic genius who mysteriously sets to dancing all particles falling within his field of force. Byron, his near-contemporary, assailed convention at safe remove. Pushkin went him one better by staying within his Slavic milieu. Struggling to slough off its deadening weight, he acted as true agent of historic ferment. Sun. 9-1-46

Today Pushkin, rabid individualist, has little political meaning, least of all in his homeland. But in his heart was hung a Russian bell of incomparable resonance. Even today, it is said, his poems start tears in Russian eyes, and official films pay him homage. For the bell of Pushkin, when struck, gave out tones of exquisite purity and seeking. Its voice is the voice of Eros, greatest of all the gods, outranking even so potent a demiurge as Stalin.

Since Pushkin was a plant that flourished only in the climate of love, Miss Lambert is quite justified in emphasizing the erotic side of his career. She also writes her original in French, a language better equipped than English to explore the nuances of love as a cult. Her prose seems consciously allied to painting. Everything is reduced to essential forms. The images are concrete and alive with fresh, gilty color. Much credit must be given to Willard R. Trask, Miss Lambert's translator, for preserving these deceptively simple qualities.

Hannibal Pushkin, African black man taken into slavery by the Turks, in the service of Peter the Great, became an engineer of note. For this he was ennobled and granted land and serfs. His descendant, Alexander Pushkin, inherited from Hannibal a negroid cast of face, a bizarre family reputation and no money. He began to attract attention with his violent escapades and clever verse while attending the famous imperial boarding school of Czarskoe Selo. Karamzin, literary pundit of the period, came to the school to hear him recite. Very shortly after graduation Pushkin was banished to South Russia for his free thinking.

EXILE saved him from participation in the ill-fated Decembrist uprising on the accession of Nicholas. The new Czar summoned Pushkin to St. Petersburg, where he could keep him under his eye and occupied with innocuous literary tasks. He was not allowed to publish his chef d'oeuvre "Eugen Onegin." At 30 he married, hoping half-heartedly to find peace in domesticity. On this occasion he remarked that Natalya Goncharov, his pretty but unresponsive bride, was number 113 in his list of women. After marriage he wrote little and was the prey to the corrosive jealousy of the varietistic temperament. At 37 he was killed in a duel fought quite needlessly on his wife's account.

Not even so sympathetic a biographer as Miss Lambert can explain the miracle of poetic creation, and she wisely limits herself to portrayal of its heated physical conditions. She leaves the impression that Pushkin sought women as the drunkard seeks the bottle, in order to experience the illusory sensation of poise and well-being corresponding to his poetic vision. Whatever else, Miss Lambert makes her hero come to life with startling clarity. She has written what very much deserves to be a hit.

Alabama Display Will Be Feature Of Chicago Meet

Nightingale Herald
Columbus, Ga.
Sunday 9-15-46

"Alabama—A Good Place to Work and Live" is the title of a beautifully prepared book just published by the Industrial Development Department of Alabama Power Company. The book was designed primarily for distribution at the Chemical Exposition in Chicago the week of September 9th at which an attendance of approximately 25,000 is expected. Mr. W. W. Hunt, Jr., district manager, states that the Company also will have a large booth at the Exposition at which the natural resources of Alabama will be dramatically displayed. 9-15-46 Sun.

The book, which is in keeping with the high standard set by Alabama Power Company, will also be used by the Industrial Development Department in its efforts to persuade industries in fields other than chemical to establish plants in Alabama.

The Company is also making the book available to Alabama Chambers of Commerce and other industrial development groups. 9-15-46

LIFE IN MISSISSIPPI

NIGHT FIRE, by Edward Kimbrough. Published by Rinehart & Co., Inc.; 343 pages, $2.75. The News Birmingham, Ala.

It has become trite to say that only a native Southerner can write about the problems of the South with penetrating truth, but one feels this with new conviction after reading "Night Fire." Edward Kimbrough, who spent much of his childhood in Mississippi and now lives in Alabama, writes about the South of today as he sees it and, although the picture is far from pleasant, it rings true. There is great satisfaction in reading a book of this kind after the many synthetic treatises which have recently come from the press, evidently written by authors who, having studied modern American social problems, have decided that the South is a good topic for a book.

Lillian Smith wrote once, in discussing the Broadway hit, "Deep Are the Roots," that "too deep are the roots" of the race problem in the South for anyone "who has not been hurt by it" to write about it convincingly. There is no way to know how much Edward Kimbrough has been hurt by situations growing out of the race problem, but we can be sure he has known it at first hand and felt it deeply, and his novel reflects that first-hand knowledge. Sat. 10-19-46

The problem arising when an author deals with a social problem he has not known personally is that he usually writes a dry tract with his characters made to order to fit the "message" he is trying to convey. Only when the problem is in a man's blood can he handle it effortlessly enough to make his book come to life. It is the starting point that is different, and in "Night Fire" the starting point is the people in the story. The social questions which are a part of their lives fall into place naturally and emerge convincingly as the story progresses.

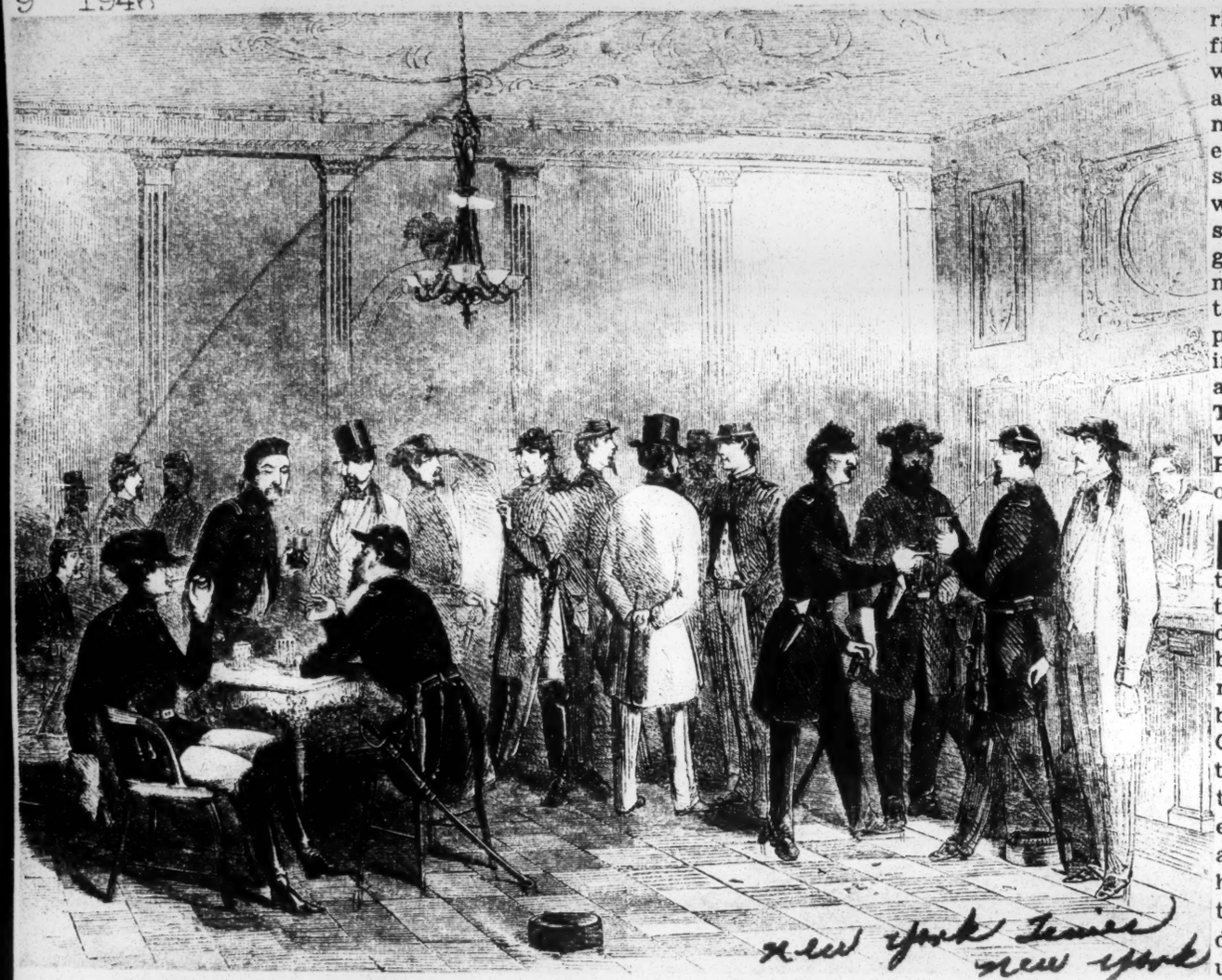
"Night Fire" is the story of Ashby Pelham, member of an old Southern family oppressed by traditions he must live up to. He fights to save an old "family" Negro from a lynching threatened by a hot-headed sheriff. There is a love story too, and the plot, which takes place within a short period of time, moves along rapidly as Ashby, pursued by the sheriff and his deputies, seeks to spirit the persecuted Negro away to safety. Indeed, the book is almost too melodramatic in parts.

Around the central figures Mr. Kimbrough places a number of fully-realized characters who subtly bring into focus various Southern economic and political problems, all bearing on the chief problem of race relations. There is the mill owner who, out of a bitter experience in his own childhood, has proved that white men and Negroes can work together without friction; there is the other mill owner who wants to encourage friction between whites and Negroes in order to exploit them both; there is the sheriff, who feels that he must at intervals pin all recent crimes on some Negro in order to maintain his prestige.

Mr. Kimbrough does not stop with a mere surface portrayal of race friction in the South. He probes into the deeper psychological effects on both whites and Negroes. In the case of Temp, the Negro being pursued by the sheriff, more is involved than the fact that his life is endangered. His personal dignity has been destroyed. "In his mind," the author writes, "a man makes the man he'd be, and if you destroy the man in his mind there's nothing left."

In the case of Ashby, more is involved than saving the life of a Negro. He is finding himself because he is finding something to fight for. All of his life he has felt that he was only the shadow of one of his ancestors who was a hero in the War Between the States. Now that he has found his own vision, his own individuality emerges. "I think maybe when it comes close to being we're all born disinherited," he says. "I think we've got to make the earth ours. We've got to buy it all over again."

Mr. Kimbrough's style is easy and fast moving, his descriptive passages, in many places, are excellent. There are times, in descriptive passages, when the author's style is ing. There are times, in descriptive passages, when the author's style is ing. There are times, in descriptive passages, when the author's style is ing



Wartime Richmond: The Bar at the Spotswood Hotel. 1-20-46

Heroes, Profiteers, Bomb-Proofs

THE BELEAGUERED CITY. Richmond 1861-65. By Alfred Hoyt Bill. 313 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

By DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN

IN this brief volume a well-furnished student of the War Between the States has undertaken to describe the life of Richmond, Va., during the years that city was capital of the war-wrung Confederacy. Mr. Bill writes clearly and uses effectively the standard, published authorities. He has had access, also, to a file of The Richmond Examiner, the vehement anti-Administration paper. All that can be done by a man to understand the elusive spirit of a city with traditions not his own, Mr. Bill has done with scholarly care.

By the census of 1860 Richmond had a population of 37,000. Before the end of the war that number had risen to an estimated 100,000. Few additional residences were built. Congestion would have been beyond endurance if it had not been customary to put two or three double beds in the large chambers of existing homes. That was a solution of the "housing crisis" not possible in a day when a "bed" room is distinctly singular.

AMONG the 60,000 who came to live in Richmond were many of the leading men of the South, hundreds of women refugees from Virginia plantations, endless processions of sick and wounded soldiers, their anxious families—and a multitude of the undesirables of every dark dye. Blockade runners of questionable loyalty elbowed men engaged in secret trading with the enemy. New Orleans gamblers tried their tricks on Baltimore card sharps. Prostitutes arrived from everywhere and nowhere. The town seemed full of spies whose clumsiness was outdone only by that of the provost marshal's guard, the M. P.'s of the day.

Over this swollen and diverse population Government exercised no restraints other than those of peacetime law. Public men insisted that the Southern States had seceded as a protest against the violation of the Federal Constitution by the North: they would not themselves override the very rights they were fighting to defend. Every trader was free to sell what he had at any price he could get for it. The most that Government ever did, even when the scanty supply of salt or flour had been cornered, was to release a little from Army stores at lower prices. To the last gasp of a bankrupt treasury, money changers were at liberty to speculate in gold and to depress Government credit by beating down Confederate currency as fast and as far as they could. The self-restraint of Government was constitutionalism gone mad. Public policy expressed the logic of suicide.

General Robert E. Lee.

HOW Richmond survived in the face of all this is part of the theme of Mr. Bill. He does not displace his values. Richmond became the symbol of Southern resistance primarily because the best military resources of the Confederacy and the highest military skill were employed to protect it. Half a score of other elements of successful defense are mentioned by Mr. Bill. Perhaps the least understood of them was the religion of the dominant majority and, in particular, of the women. In common with almost all other Southern cities of that era, Richmond had a high rate of communicable disease. Cholera had threatened the city more than once. In 1855 yellow fever had come as close as Norfolk. Typhoid was the expected scourge of summer. Illness and death always were near. Religion was largely a doctrine of the acceptance of misery as preparation for the bliss of eternity. This was a faith that responded completely to the appeal of General Lee and of his like-minded lieutenants. Soldiers became preachers; public men put on the robe of prophets. The faithful were exhorted to endure hardships that would, in "God's good time," be rewarded with victory. War was the sternest discipline of souls that sought peace—strange paradox!

Biography of Duke Ellington on Market

NEW YORK — (Creative Age Press) — Man and music, Duke Ellington is an American trademark. His biography written by Barry Ulanov, editor of Metronome, is not only the story of individual success, but the story of a band, an era in American life and a chapter in the history of music.

Product of the creative culture in which perhaps half of our musical instruments were first developed, Duke Ellington has attained unequaled stature as a composer. The man who was born to jazz, who gave swing its impetus, was a jazz antiquity in 1935 when other swingsters held the highlight, but the Duke has maintained his enviable position because of his attitude, as he expressed it:

"There is something lasting to be obtained from the Negro idiom. I predict that Negro music will be alive years after swing is dead. Negro music has color, harmony, melody and rhythm. It's what I interested in and I am going to stick to it. Let the others whirl and jerk, like ickies and jitterbugs on swing and let me sit back and drink in the music.

Born and bred in Washington, D. C., Edward Kennedy Ellington began his career winning prizes for drawing and poster-making, but recruiting a band was his first real success. Many of the members who started with him are still with him, and almost all stayed a long, long time. Among the best-known members are: Otto Hardwick, Freddie Guy, Arthur Whetsol, and Sonny Greer, all top-flight artists and personalities. From rent parties and one-night stands back and forth across the country, to royal reception in Europe, from the Cotton Club to Carnegie Hall, the Ellington band has become a classic.

Duke the man is a solid citizen who gives direct lie to the teacher of his youth who gazed into the clouded crystal ball to say, "Boy, you are never going to get anywhere!" reative Age Press will publish his biography in late November ($3.00), the story of how he got eve.ywhere, and for the benefit of the discophiles, the book will include a complete list of all the Ellington recordings.

Some Unfinished Business of Democracy

MARCHING BLACKS: By Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. 218 pp. Dial Press. $2.50.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Harlem's Congressman and minister of the Abyssinian Baptist Church, speaks from the viewpoint and in the distinct manner of two, or perhaps three, incarnations as he discusses the race problem in the United States, its history, its manifestations and its proposed solutions. The homilies and passionate flights of the evangelist ("Glory Hallelujah!" . . .), the restraint of the responsible political and moral leader adjuring his people to "disciplined resentment," and the intense feeling of the individual who has been drawn from the South of his furious hatred. His proposal for a mass migration of Negroes to other regions of the United States, and his rationalizations of the discipline as injustices gall him—all are steeped with an impulse of revenge on himself writhes under the bonds of since World War I; yet, in the end, a program is suggested which is fairly assumption that 9,000,000 refugees from Jim Crow could readily be absorbed elsewhere is a bit offhand, and the suggestion that democracy's fight is not where the issue has been drawn for the attainment of true democracy seems a bit unworthy of a leader.

However, the book has value as an in America, on another of gratification for social, economic and political gains mingled.

project, impress one as involving a other reminder of the unfinished business of democracy in the South for its ra-

ness of democracy—the discriminations and exclusions imposed on a people by a country that recently asked for the lives of those people in a fight against discriminations and exclusions. There is a great deal about Harlem and its progress, about realistic politics in which Mr. Powell had a part, about pressures and the labor pains of equality; and there is, occasionally, too much of doctrinaire bias (e.g., pro-C.I.O.-anti-A.F.L.) always colored by an acute race consciousness. There are, indeed, racial inflections in the the very language of the book, which give it a warmth. Occasional inaccuracies in names and locations are unfortunate blemishes. 1-27-42

Joe Louis biography reported selling well

NEW YORK — "Joe Louis: American", by Margery Miller, is doing well in bookstores because of the interest in the coming Louis-Conn fight, the biography's publishers, Current Books, inc., reported this week. Australian rights have been sold and negotiations are underway for the sale of British and French rights.

Part of the story appears in the book section of the February Pageant magazine.

New African Folk Tales

A collection of authentic folk tales of the Baganda tribe of East Africa, titled **Wakaima and the Clay Man** by Dr. Ernest B. Kalibala, will be on the bookshelves this months, according to an announcement by Longmans, Green & Company of New York and Toronto. Dr. Kalibala is professor of sociology at Morris Brown College in Atlanta and wrote the book in collaboration with Mary Gould Davis.

Facts and Confusions

By MERLE NANCE

THE NEGRO AND THE POSTWAR WORLD, by Rayford W. Logan; The Minorities Publishers, Washington, D.C., $1.50.

THE NEGRO AND THE POSTWAR WORLD, in the words of its author, is a kind of basic primer for a "brief interpretation and analysis of the plight of the Negro in all parts of the world today." In aiming at a simple highlighted description of the Negro's status throughout the world, Professor Logan admirably achieves his objective. His competent array of facts leads him to the conclusion that there is no land left wherein the Negro is not the exploited victim of white imperialism — in the West Indies, the Pacific Islands, Latin America, the United States and Canada, and even in Africa itself. Ably equipped by training and experience, Dr. Logan has done a good job of factual presentation.

But when he leaves the detailed examination of the Negro's status in specific regions of the globe and in his final chapter treats the general problem of the Negro's relationship to the total complexity of postwar world politics, he stumbles on some very commonplace confusions. He affirms the obvious fact that in the "next generation at least" the preponderance of world power will lie with the United States and the Soviet Union, and then blandly asserts that "both of them are imperialistic powers."

The charge of Soviet "imperialism" is supported by the allegation that "the inhabitants of Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania have not been allowed to vote for control by the Soviet Union," and that "in the eastern Balkans the Soviet Union has also imposed its domination rather than sought the desires of the masses of the people." And for good measure, Professor Logan chooses to cast doubt on whether the Communist regime at Yenan represents the wishes of the peoples in western China.

The Soviet Union has displayed a remarkable ability to survive such allegations. But can the Negro community survive and advance if, in this day and age, it becomes muddled about such concepts as "democracy" and "imperialism"? Why level against the Balkan and Baltic states charges of the sort that the apologists for white supremacy have levelled against the Reconstruction democracy of the post-Civil War South?

Why regret the fact that in countries like Yugoslavia it is not the fascist and feudal counterparts of the Ku Klux Klan who rule, but rather the masses of the peasants and workers who have been compelled to take some stern measures against fascist remnants? And if Soviet policy, and in some instances the presence of Soviet troops, has exercised a restraining influence on the would-be Kluxers, then let Bilbo and Rankin shed the tears.

American history amply demonstrates the profound fact that there can be no democracy which ultimately will serve both under master and slave. Rather, the aim of true democracy should be to eliminate the master-and-slave relationship regardless of what form it takes.

And until such an ideal is consummated, the true democrat must, in each instance when the conflict becomes overt, choose as between the "democracy" of the KKK and the democracy of the Reconstruction; as between the "democracy" of the royalty and feudal aristocracy of Yugoslavia and that of the national front led by Tito; as between the "democracy" of a handful of Chinese mandarins, speculators, usurers, and child slave traders, and the democracy of the Chinese peasantry and working class and large sections of the middle class; as between the "democracy" that massacres Indonesians and the democracy that in the span of one generation has lifted the peoples of the Soviet middle and far east from centuries-old backwardness and absolutism to modern economic and cultural advance.

It should not be difficult for the Negro, trying to find his way in this postwar world, to make his choice. But Professor Logan's confusions between the form and substance of democracy do not help.

Books by DuBois, Wright, Mrs. Robeson Among 50 Best in '45

CHICAGO. — The American Library Association last Thursday selected "Color and Democracy" by Dr. W. E. B. DuBois; "African Journey" by Mrs. Eslanda Robeson, and "Black Boy" by Richard Wright among 50 "outstanding books of 1945."

The books were chosen, the association said, as "most worthy of the attention of the present-day reader, though not necessarily of permanent value."

HOW A BLIND SOLDIER GETS INSIGHT ON RACE PREJUDICE

By ALBERT DEUTSCH in PM

I've been reading a tenderly wrought and interesting novel, Lights out (Morrow, $2.50), by Baynard Kendrick, who has been active in rehabilitation work with blind soldiers. The novel tells the story of Larry Nevin, a Southern GI who's blinded by a German sniper's shot at the French front and learns a lot of things about people that he never knew before.

There are some passages in this fine book that ought to be made required reading for all Congressional candidates from Mississippi and thereabouts. Larry Nevin winds up in the Valley Forge Army Hospital.

He strikes up a close friendship with another blind soldier named Joe Morgan. They have been inseparable companions for weeks.

They are sitting together when a group of new arrivals is brought into their ward.

"I heard that three of those new guys are niggers," says Larry. "I didn't know we had niggers in this ward."

"I've been here seven and a half months now," Joe replies.

Larry is shocked and humiliated by the realization that his friend Joe is a Negro. All the ingrained racial prejudices rise within him.

"He'd gone downtown with a nigger! Worse than that, he liked the guy . . . What the hell was the Army doing, allowing Negroes to associate with white men who had lost their sight? Negroes should be earmarked somehow.

"He should have known. Any kid could tell a nigger, if only by the smell. That was a simple fact of life pounded into his head since his very first day in school. Niggers didn't talk like whites, or act like whites, or think like whites, or smell like whites.

"Then, by all the glory of unsullied Southern womanhood, how did they think and smell? It was too much to bear. He felt himself enmeshed in a foul dark net of ignorance. Part of his life, entrenched in his mind more strongly than sight, had been ripped away in an instant. His eyes were gone and his remaining senses had tricked him . . . Everything he had learned in life was smashed . . .

"How did you know a nigger was black, when you couldn't see? How did you know that Stetrn (another blind soldier) was a Jew, unless by his name?"

Weeks pass. Larry does a lot of thinking. He meets up with Joe again at the Old Farms Convalescent Hospital at Avon, Conn. Larry asks Joe to sit down with him.

"He (Larry) wanted the girls from Hartford to see ,and the Red Cross workers, and all the detachment men. He was fighting the toughest fight of his life, battling a dozen ancestors—gray-clad soldiers who'd lost their lives for the Stars and Bars.

"'Joe, I'm sorry. I've been a fool. I'd like to be friends . . . I

ges to Negro labor, attention recognized than foreign born, wish to hear.
changes to is focused on the various and they offer a permanent outlet for An important, would-be help-
diverse roles played by govern- the pent-up resentment of bigots. ful book that should be read im-
ment, management and organized Resistance to advances in the partially by labor, management
labor. At the same time, issues economic and occupational status and Mr. Average Citizen.
of social and political significance of the Negro without thought of —H. B.
facing the nation in the postwar future racial harmony is one of
period are brought home to even the first steps to mounting in-
the smaller communities for their flammatory material. Witness
use in better industrial-racial re- Richmond's own Westwood "proj-
lations. ect" now in City Council.
As color minorities in the Factors that can be remedied
United States are more easily now and potential sore spots that

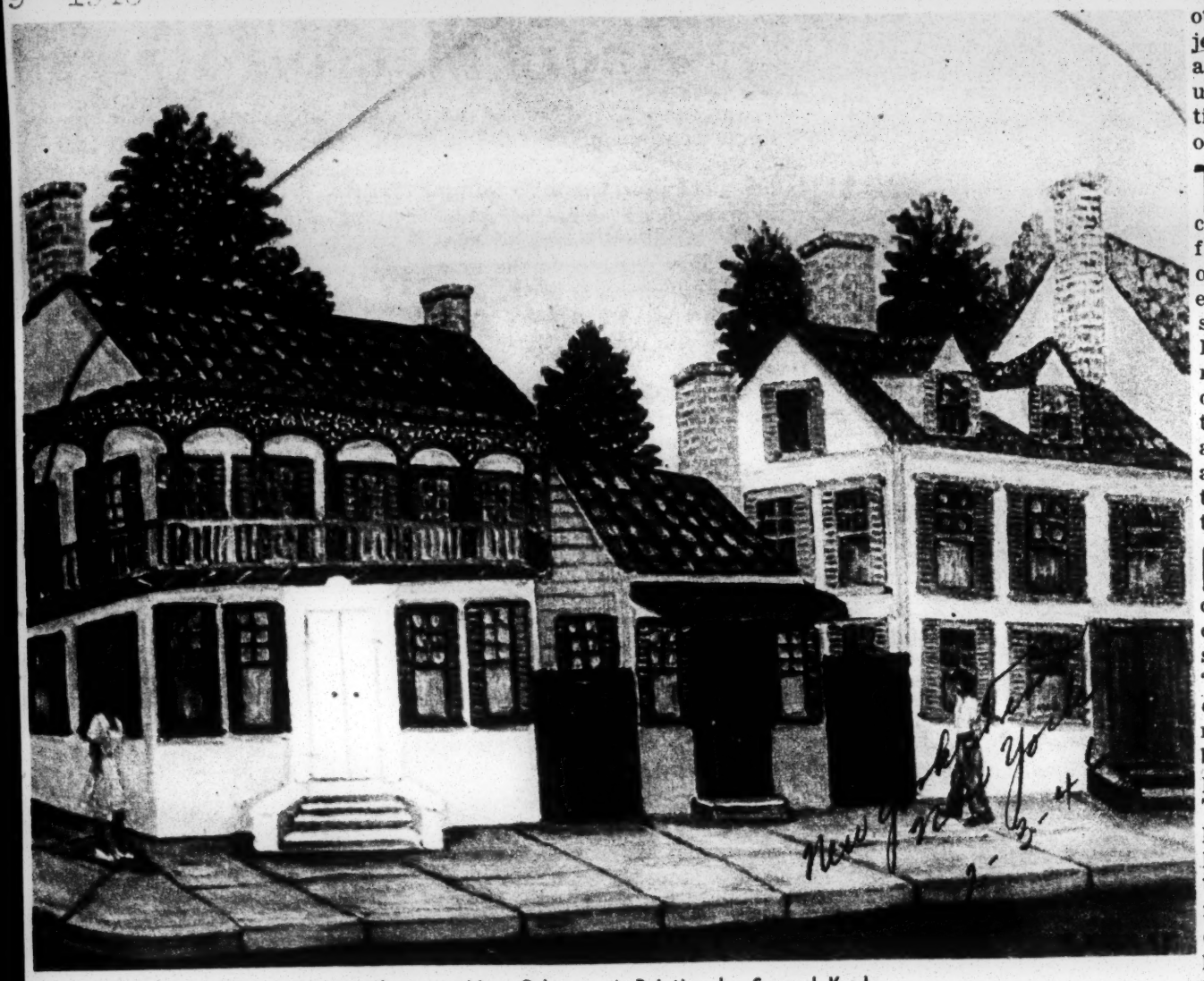
iked you the moment I met you—better than any fellow I've known.
I like you now. Don't you see you've taught me something?
"'That a blind man can't tell black from white?' says Joe."

COMMUNITY and national de-
fects, strained by wartime
conditions, are mirrored in this
important book. The author
shows the transition of Negro
labor during the war years from
an unwanted source of man-
power to a vital part in produc-
tion.

Describing many occupational

Negro Transition In Labor Traced

NEGRO LABOR, by Robert C. Weaver. Harcourt, Brace & Co., N. Y. Tabled, indexed. 329 pp. $3.



A Street in New Orleans. A Painting by Samuel Koch.

Book Review

Twenty-Four Hours in the "Quarter"

THOSE OTHER PEOPLE. By Mary King O'Donnell. 343 pp. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $2.

By ISA KAPP

New York N.Y.

A PROCEDURE which in both John Dos Passos' "Manhattan Transfer" and Jules Romains' "Men of Good Will" resulted in a highly intricate fictional tissue, has in "Those Other People" been oversimplified and narrowed. Using the shifting camera-eye technique of the collective novel, Mrs. O'Donnell recreates one day of life in the New Orleans French Quarter. Instead of assuming their position in an orthodox plot, figures emerge accidentally, shown in characteristic preoccupations. A shy hare-lipped woman hides behind her washline to learn about her neighbors and construes as sinful whatever she finds puzzling. A curious girl wonders who rings the church bell. An old woman nurses her feet and dreams of winning a lottery. A querulous wife worries about an eccentric sister-in-law. 2-3-46

The narrative hammers out the repetitive, determined quality of such behavior. Mrs. O'Donnell's attitude, an infrequent one in modern fiction and modern criticism, is that personality can be contrived palpably through intimacy with habitual gestures and inclinations rather than climactic ones. N.Y. Times New York

What there is of suspense and momentum in the book is centered in the experience of a nervous, unsettled, middle-aged woman who has until this day failed to release any impulse toward enjoyment. Now, in an adrenal surge toward self-preservation, she decides to find the unprepossessing but pleasant sailor she has picked up at a bar the night before. The moments of hesitant edging toward recognition of their need for one another by the sailor and the woman fall smoothly into place in the diffuse life of the Quarter, so that the focus can again become collective. 2-3-46

Mrs. O'Donnell is very conscious of the way in which lives impinge upon one another and of the shocking, excluding, alienating nature of a society where people live at tangents. Lives touch and are no richer, only occasionally inconvenienced, embarrassed or superficially stimulated. The book is full of accidental, ironic junctions. Two people visit the cathedral, one to resolve his unorthodox, confused religious humanism, the other to draw a swastika. A brother and sister are at different moments in the day excessively and oppositely affected by a meeting with a blind beggar woman.

Throughout, the Quarter is coalesced by the live, sensuous, permeating image of the omnipresent rain and by the awareness of passing time (here, as in Virginia Woolf, a moving substitute for intense dramatic conflict). The distinguishing mark of the Quarter, which, incidentally, resembles a number of poor sections in New York, seems to be its throwing together of colored and white, Catholic and Protestant, on one block. Although the inhabitants are not particularly helpful to one another, they have no intrinsic objection to non-segregation. They accept this condition quite casually, since they are publicly justified by the Bohemian tradition of the neighborhood.

THERE is a certain sentimental condescension, fortunately modified by reserve, in the treatment of the characters, who are all, either for social or personal reasons, pitiable. The only rebellious individual has postponed her moment of decision until the age of 40. Of the three persons who take their pleasure instinctively and unquestioningly, one is lazy and self-centered, one is ineffectual and inarticulate, and the third is senile.

IN its tendency to envision compassionately a gallery of eccentrics, "Those Other People" is similar to Sherwood Anderson's "Winesburg, Ohio." Both writers, moreover, are tenderly immersed in a community and, in both, personalities emerge under public approval or disapproval. The rebellious woman, for example, is seen from the worried point of view of a stodgy brother, the shocked point of view of a religious woman and the appreciative point of view of an uninhibited sailor. Like Anderson, Mrs. O'Donnell seems to assume that the communal life almost entirely sums up the individual one. This is not to say that she is unconcerned with the internal and private, but that there are fewer completely private, self-sufficient individuals among "Those Other People" than in most fictional groups. 2-3-46

Mrs. O'Donnell writes with a consistent, appraising sensitivity that we sometimes miss in writers of greater emotional impact. If there is anything to be skeptical of in "Those Other People," it is the smooth, compact fastidiousness of the framework. The story begins and ends with the same sun-loving, plant-like, absorptive old woman. This sonata form is rigorously maintained and too pointedly offsets the scattered kaleidoscopic effect of the material.

THE SIEGE OF RICHMOND

Birmingham News

THE BELEAGUERED CITY, by Alfred Hoyt Bill. Published by Alfred A. Knopf; 336 pages, $3.

It is easier to understand Douglas Freeman's evocations of the Confederate past than this remarkable performance in the same field. For Freeman is a Virginian of Virginians, whose father was a Confederate veteran, whose life and work have been confined to Richmond. It is a different matter with the author of this book. He is a New York Yankee and a Yale graduate. That he could have become so steeped in the history of the period he describes, and that he should have been able to recapture all its military, social and political elements so authentically and stirringly, is proof of what learning can do if it is interwoven with imagination and human understanding. 1-26-46

Mr. Bill is no Spring chicken. He was born in 1879. This book is therefore the harvest of a lifetime. Mr. Bill has been interested in the War Between the States from early boyhood, and for a reason which he gives as follows: "That war was recent then as World War I is now. Men who had fought at Antietam and marched with Sherman told me stories of their adventures. One of my uncles had died of tuberculosis, which he had contracted while guarding Confederate prisoners at Elmira. At Gettysburg a great-uncle had collected five Minie balls in his body, and by the aching of one of them, which had never been removed, could always tell when it was going to rain." This explains why Mr. Bill became absorbed in the war of the '60s, but it does not explain the transference of attitude which enables him to go through his narrative as though he were an objective Southerner.

Mr. Bill's premise is that "the American Civil War consisted of the attack and defense of Richmond." That came to be realized quite early in the struggle. New Orleans, Vicksburg, Atlanta, Savannah, Charleston might fall, but so long as Richmond stood, the Confederacy "was a going concern." So the defense of Richmond on the one hand and its capture on the other represented the major aspect of the strategy of the struggle. "From 1861 to 1865 the story of Richmond is the story of a siege." That is Mr. Bill's thesis, bringing home to the reader in the course of the book what must have been the realities in the cities abroad which so recently withstood long-drawn-out attacks or succumbed to unbearable pressure.

Richmond, a city of 40,000 or so, became a much more congested city as the war went on. Everything which had to do with sustaining the life and strength of the Confederacy was centered in this capital. Refugees, prisoners, sick and wounded soldiers helped to swell the tide of population. As food grew scarce, as everything grew scarce, as the cost of a one-sided conflict was brought home, inflation, profiteering, corruption came into their own. The Confederate government, always under the sharpest criticism, and largely an improvised affair, provided no comfort for a community so hagridden by innumerable woes. Yet the people bore up magnificently. They made every sacrifice, though there was plenty of griping at the authorities. But they were steadfast and courageous until the very end. 1-26-46

Mr. Bill tells us about this four-year siege, combining a sense of human values with the larger issues of history. He contrives to preserve an admirably balanced outlook, despite his cavalier treatment of Judah P. Benjamin. He has somehow succeeded in providing a canvas calculated to justify Southern pride in a heroism which cannot be overestimated, which was shown in circumstances of bitterest tragedy and disillusionment. That, at this late hour, a historian should repeat an oft-told story to give it the effect of freshness, unborn interest and unfading beauty is a great achievement.—E. L. O

The Booker T.

All Brave Sailors: The Story of the S. S. Booker T. Washington, by John Beecher. New York: L. B. Fischer. 208 pages. $2.50.

ALL BRAVE SAILORS is a war chronicle of the *S. S. Booker T. Washington*, a kind of personal log kept in terms of the climate of democracy that John Beecher found aboard the ship. The *Booker T. Washington* was the first American vessel commissioned under a Negro master; her crew consisted of veterans of the Spanish civil war and the labor movement, old seamen, ship's officers who had long been Jim Crowed out of their professions, and civilians and refugees sent to sea by the war. And in terms of racial background her crew list reads like the catalogue of American types found in "Ballad for Americans"—some, like Beecher, being white Southerners.

One of the more interesting war books, *All Brave Sailors* consists of brief profiles of Captain Hugh Mulzac and his crew, accounts of the ship's NMU local in action, descriptions of the crew's reaction to Army Jim Crow policy in foreign ports, and anecdotes of the seamen's adventures and friendships with anti-fascist groups in the war zones. Being a poet as well as the *Booker T. Washington's* purser, Beecher saw the ship (named rather ambiguously after a Negro educator who believed that Negroes and whites should be kept "separate as the fingers of the hand") as a symbol of a type of democracy in which value rests not upon skin color but upon human quality, intelligence and ability, and where black and white men worked and played together in harmony. On this level his book is a recommendation that such a democratic integration be effected throughout our social structure.

Beecher is impressed by that warmth of human relationships so often noted by writers when they venture during times of war among soldiers, sailors and airmen, or in times of peace, among the peoples of pre-industrial societies in which relationships are based not upon an abstract market as in capitalist societies, but upon a more direct and less complex awareness of social necessity. Thus, for Beecher, the *Booker T. Washington* becomes a concrete floating symbol of tranquil interracial brotherhood, crossing the seas on duty in a war of racial strife, but remaining within itself undisturbed. Here the racial storms which psychiatrists and sociologists find in the hearts of all Americans have been replaced by the warm trade winds of trade unionism.

The result is a heartwarming but somewhat sentimentalized picture which when related back to life, whether in terms of the relationships of seamen or trade-unionists, we find omitting even that normal interracial conflict which at this stage of historical development is the dynamic health of American democratic institutions. Despite their high political consciousness, for a mixed group of Americans a-sail on the rough seas of our race relations, Beecher's seamen encountered an embarrassment of fine weather.

What we have in *All Brave Sailors* is the possibility of racial equality minus the process: the democratic dream presented in terms of a Liberty ship. But ships, unfortunately, are ships and states are states, and neither can be the other. And while the NMU has a most encouraging record for chasing Jim Crow off its boats, the CIO has yet to evolve a plan for chasing a Bilbo off the bridge of our "ship of state."

Actually the section of *All Brave Sailors* which is most exciting and of really lasting value is that in which Beecher sketches the history of his family. He is a descendant of the family noted for its orators, theologians and college founders, for its Abolitionists and for Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. From the Revolution to Reconstruction the Beecher family was one in which the broad, vital concept of democracy that marked the early phase of our history burned most intensely. Among those Americans whose ethical assaults against slavery made possible our industrial society, it is representative; and in its history, with the precision of a well made play, might be seen that ironic transvaluation which attended the secularization of our culture: Beecher's father, the heir of theologians and Abolitionists, became a businessman, who, in following the economic tides unleashed by industrialization, came to harbor in Alabama—where his son was to absorb the mores and attitudes which it had been his forefathers' most intense passion to destroy. Now, eighty years later, after working his way painfully through the distorted values of the South via jobs in steel mills and such New Deal agencies as the FEPC, Beecher has rediscovered the fighting tradition of his fathers. In these brief pages of *All Brave Sailors* he has given us the outline of a really important autobiography, one which should add much to our knowledge of why our society became what it is.

RALPH ELLISON

NEGRO LABOR: A NATIONAL PROBLEM, by Robert C. Weaver (Harcourt, Brace, $3). Only when war comes does the Negro worker succeed in obtaining a place in the industrial scheme of things. The insatiable demand for manpower brings him up several notches, but when peace is declared, back he goes to the dirty and the heavy job and to the menial tasks in the service industries. Mr. Weaver's study, which deals primarily with the Negro's employment experience in this war, describes in unmistakably plain language our shocking treatment of black labor. During World War I, Negro work teams were good enough to set production records in shipbuilding and construction. But the "normalcy" of the twenties, and the depression, relegated the Negro worker to the social scrap heap. And even in this war, Mr. Weaver shows, it was not easy to overcome the barriers of prejudice and stupidity. He relates how difficult it was to get jobs for Negroes in certain crafts, shipbuilding and local transportation. His recital of events in Detroit, Philadelphia and Los Angeles is a moving one, in spite of a dry and factual presentation. Management alone, says the author, cannot be indicted; the stubborn record of certain labor unions is not a very pleasant one. Nor, for that matter, did government agencies—other than the NYA and the FEPC—give much assistance. To return to prewar occupational patterns would be tragic; yet will we be able to offer enough jobs to eliminate racial competition? That, Mr. Weaver correctly suggests, is a problem that presses for immediate solution.

Our Shortcomings As a Good Neighbor, And What Latin America Hopes From Us

THE LATIN AMERICAN FRONT: By Joseph F. Privitera. 212 pp. Bruce Publishing Co. $2.25.

A Review by H. F. Willkie

This stimulating, vigorous, well-planned little book on the problems of South America and the decline of our Good Neighbor Policy deserves sincere attention. Dr. Privitera, now director of studies at the Brazil-United States Institute, Sao Paulo, Brazil, has also served as assistant professor of Spanish and Portuguese at St. Louis University. His experience as a resident of Mexico and Brazil and as a lecturer and radio speaker about Latin America, and his scholarly knowledge of politics, economics and sociology make him a thoughtful writer whose words should be heeded in this time of troubled Pan-American relations.

In spite of warnings by such people as Sumner Welles, Henry Wallace and the late President Roosevelt, and in spite of earnest efforts on the part of statesmen and educators to arouse our interest in Central and South America by conferences, the setting up of an office of a co-ordinator of Latin American affairs under Nelson Rockefeller and the sponsoring of Latin American institutes and college and university workshops, we are not in general really interested in our neighbors to the south. During the war, when we needed South American products, many of them like rubber, sugar and rare metals no longer obtainable from our usual sources in occupied countries, we loudly protested our friendship, said how sorry we were that we had been somewhat imperialistic in the past, and set up a Council of National Defense. Now that the war is over, we are beginning to find that some of our trade agreements with South America are no longer advantageous, and many of us are returning to our easy, ignorant belief that South Americans are lazy, unprogressive, unclean and politically irresponsible.

Dr. Privitera, who observes the deterioration of the promising Good Neighbor Policy with alarm, has set out to examine the psychological, economic and political conditions influencing our attitude toward the people of Latin America and their attitude toward us. He states his thesis at the outset:

"We must treat Latin Americans fairly at all times; we must cease insulting them by our condescension, we must try to understand them, not according to our standards but according to theirs; and finally and above all else, we must deal with them as equals, for they are precisely that."

In the first section, "The Psychological Front," the author boldly attacks our capricious, insulting misconception of the South American personality. After a couple of rather confused and wordy chapters about the parallel between the average Latin American and Don Quixote and about his hatred of regimentation, Dr. Privitera picks up speed and authority in his discussion and interestingly analyzes the elusive character of our neighbors and points out our gross blunders in dealing with them.

In the second section, "The Economic Front," which is the most incisive and logically presented portion of the book, the author describes American exploitation of Latin America. His account of our neglect of Puerto Rico, which has seriously hurt our prestige in South America, reminds us forcibly of the political hypocrisy in our history which we conveniently overlook.

In "The Political Front," Dr. Privitera briefly discusses the recent history of Argentina and Brazil and brilliantly describes the national characteristics. Then he speaks at some length about the threat to international unity of the Chilean Popular Front, the narrowly internationalistic spirit of Peruvian Aprismo, in which Indo-Americanism is substituted for Pan-Americanism, and the Mexican Revolution.

A reader may feel that Dr. Privitera is occasionally over-dogmatic (as, for example, when he says that all American school children should study Spanish for at least six years, and when he says that "Protestantism and capitalism are inextricably bound together"), and he may think that the author's veneration of Henry Wallace is extreme. He may even conclude that many parts of the book were too hastily written, and too much reliance is placed on newspaper articles and the opinions of the editors of Life. He is an apathetic American indeed, however, if he can read this book and not be gravely disturbed by the passionate evidence of our shortcomings in our treatment of the Pan-American question.

When a person who is wise, widely experienced, intelligent, sympathetic, sincere, makes a book out of the questions asked her Times by several hundred Americans, Sun. 3-[illegible]-46 and out of her always stimulating, New York N.Y. always thoughtful, always honest answers, it's a book Sun. 3-24-46 to read, lend, own.

Karsh Ottawa

If You Ask Me

Such a book is

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S

New York, N.Y.

IF YOU ASK ME contains Mrs. Roosevelt's answers to nearly three hundred questions asked her by

EDWARD L. BERNAYS
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—and more than 200 others who have turned to her for opinion, information and advice on matters close to their thoughts and lives.

Among the questions:

"If you and your husband believed in democracy so sincerely, why did you send your children to private schools"?

"Do you believe in the power of prayer"?

"What may Negroes do to preserve their gains and to continue the trend toward a fully participating citizenship"?

"Should America have a national theatre subsidized by the State"?

"What is the best way to help a young girl suddenly grown tall to overcome her feeling of awkwardness"?

"Do you approve of teaching children to believe in Santa Claus"?

"Do you believe in giving young couples an allowance so that they don't have to wait too long to be married"?

"What vocation would you choose if you could live your life over"?

"Do you think people of different religions should marry if parents object"?

"As his wife, did you believe in all the ideas of President Roosevelt"?

On questions such as these—dealing with the future of the world, our country, and the private problems of individuals, Mrs. Roosevelt has brought to bear those qualities of spirit and mind which have made her one of the great personalities of our time. To read her book is to profit by her experience in a busy, productive and influential life.

At all bookstores • **$2.50**

APPLETON-CENTURY

Mrs. Roosevelt Writes Too Quietly as Liberal—Needs Authority to Act

Washington Post, D.C.

By Sterling North

If You Ask Me. By Eleanor Roosevelt. Appleton-Century. $2.50.

3-31-46

IF YOU ASK ME, Eleanor Roosevelt is an admirable woman, truly democratic, with tolerance, sympathy and human understanding. She deserves the praise she has had from both political parties and people in every walk of life. I would like to see her elected President. But I cannot carry my enthusiasm to calling this little book of questions and answers a masterpiece of literature or even a profound philosophical catechism. It avoids too many issues where she fears she might offend, is often too "lady-like" for the fighting liberal she is.

MRS. ROOSEVELT
... *better as president?*

For instance, I don't like her evasion of the "party boss" or "city machine" issue. A fearless attack on such machines as those in Chicago and Jersey City and Philadelphia would be a kindness to both parties. She steps too softly in her defense of distribution of advice on "planned families." She misses an excellent chance to rebuke Dr. Morris Fishbein, who has the effrontery to carry his belligerent defense of status quo medicine even into a craftily worded question. Sunday

On the other hand she shows great courage in her magazine column on questions concerning racial minorities. No American is a greater defender of minorities. No one has a better right to do a little straight talking. For instance she not only fights for the rights of Negroes, as she always has, but advises Negroes against the "irresponsible and inflammatory articles which one sometimes reads in the Negro Press," jostling and pushing in crowds and "little discourtesies which some of us can easily understand and excuse, but which people who are unsympathetic can use against the whole race." Instead she suggests self-improvement and advancement by peaceful and evolutionary means. She also makes sense in speaking of the part children and artists can do in reducing race prejudice. Washington, D.C.

She commands respect in her studied opinion that we can live at peace with Russia, although she bases her belief on no false and rosy optimism. She challenges platitude when she says "Phony free enterprises" (meaning reactionary monopolists) would lead us "first to fascism . . . and then to communism." 3-31-45

In general her attitudes are highly intelligent, her heart as big as the world, her intentions of the best. But it is highly possible that so gentle and considerate a liberal speaks too quietly to move an angry, bigoted war-weary world. Mrs. Roosevelt needs something more than columns in newspapers and magazines. She needs a job of high executive authority where she can act.

Ben Burns

Chicago Defender

A Popular Approach to Africa

Chicago Sun

INTO THE VAST VOID between the American Negro and the African Negro—a gap that spans more than a century since the last slaves were brought here — a youthful, brilliant university student from Nigeria this week throws a remarkably sturdy bridge. It is a splendid book, a broad, sweeping work that better than anything in print today gives a penetrating, understanding insight into African life.

In "My Africa" (John Day Co., N. Y. $3.75), Mbonu Ojike has attempted to tell in popular terms how the average African lives, to give an idea of the simple, ordinary, dawn-to-dusk existence of the millions of Negroes who are slowly taking their place in today's modern world. It is a job that has been tried by other Africans, who have written books for the most part dull, burdensome and statistic-loaded.

Ojike, who has been going to American colleges for the past seven years, has succeeded where others failed—primarily because he has been able to get enough of an American viewpoint to look back on his life in Africa through American eyes. He has learned what Americans' chief interests are—and they vary a great deal from peoples in other nations—absorbed the American's love for human interest stories, and written a book which combines the best features of half a dozen other books on Africa and omits their faults also. Sun 2-23-46

With a light-handed approach, he has made "My Africa" a book which, as Pearl Buck says in her introduction, "makes me enjoy very much the people of whom it tells."

Tells Of Own Family's Life

OJIKE, a Nigerian who was for some time a student at the University of Chicago, begins his African story as an autobiography. He gives a very good picture of family life and customs in his Nigeria, writing an interesting account of his early childhood and his school days leading up to his decision to go to America for his university education.

However, Ojike comes from a well-to-do background and his personal story is not necessarily typical. His father married as many as 10 wives and was pretty high up in native political circles.

Perhaps the heart of Ojike's book is the second portion which is a detailed account of every phase of social, economic, religious and political life in Africa. His descriptive chapter on the diet of Africans makes intriguing reading.

Negroes will find Ojike's proposals on American - African cooperation an attractive proposition both from a racial and business point-of-view. He suggest a six-point program to push for warmer friendship between the two

Denies Antagonism To American Negroes

there is any African antagonism to American Negroes. "Only seven years ago," he says, "I did not know that black people lived in America as "savages and ica. As a matter of fact most of us were totally ously denies that ignorant of the history of Aframericans. , And

monkey chasers." He also vigor-

they were generally uninformed about us. It was therefore touchy when, on board the ship to the United States, the first Aframerican I ever met asked me: 'Is it true that Africans do not like us?' I told him that it was absolutely false because no man can hate people of whose existence he is ignorant."

More intermarriage between Africans and American Negroes is advocated by Ojike as one method of furthering relations between the two peoples.

Some of the best parts of "My Africa" are Ojike's humorous anecdotes telling of his contacts with Jim Crow and other American customs. He has also attached some valuable appendix notes which furnish good reference material on Africa.

RALPH T. JONES

Atlanta Constitution

Seventeen Stories Of American Lives

Atlanta Ga.

Wed. 3-27-46

There is a group known as the East and West Association. Its purpose is to increase mutual understanding between peoples of different nations.

By various means it has sought to advance this purpose, including the recommendation to foreign countries of motion pictures and books considered best to represent life in the United States. The pictures and books were chosen by polls and critics of both.

Then it was decided to send abroad brief biographies of men and women who represent the best in the modern life of this country. To choose 15 modern Americans as subjects for these biographies, a poll was taken among editorial writers throughout the entire country. (I forget which 15, exactly, I suggested, but most of my choice are among those finally selected.)

The staff of the Association then added a few names. The total list was then published in the magazine "Asia and the Americas," whose readers cast the final vote. Because three names tied for last place, all were included and the biographies thus number 17.

Originally these biographies were intended only for publication abroad. Hermann Hagedorn, who has written biographies of Theodore Roosevelt, Leonard Wood, and others, wrote these. They proved so interesting, however, they have been published by the John Day Company, of New York, for readers in the United States. There is added interest in the sense you get, when reading them, that you are sort of looking over the shoulders of the Chinese and Brazilian reader and trying to understand how we seem to them.

Lived This Century One rule carefully observed, in the selecting, is that every man or woman chosen must have lived in this century. Thus the first is Mark Twain, who did not die until 1910. It is thus a glimpse into the life of modern America.

Obviously, the 17 are outstanding Americans, thus it cannot be said the biographies are of "typical" Americans. That is, in one sense. For, while most of us would probably like to emulate, in our own lives, the careers of many of the 17, they are outstanding characters and thus exceptional.

It is fascinating, in reading this book of biographies, to notice that they all seem to unite, as they overlap, to create a picture of America of our times, the America of the late 1800s and the 1900s to date.

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The biographies, all included as they are in one volume of 386 pages, are brief, compact. They are, perhaps, more outlines than biographies, sketches rather than portraits. But you gain vivid pictures of each of the 17 and you feel you know all of them better, even though you may not agree with all the philosophies of life to which they subscribed.

The lives are too recent to have assumed proper focus, in some cases. They are too involved with modern conflicts in ideologies, too closely linked with public issues which still are vital. That is, a few. Not, by any means, a majority.

Your Choice? It might prove interesting, as a sort of parlor game, if you compiled your list of the 17 you consider the outstanding Americans who have lived since the turn of the century. Pause and do that now. Then you can read further in this column and see the list of the 17 actually chosen and see how closely you agree.

Here is the list of the chosen 17:

Mark Twain, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Thomas A. Edison, Luther Burbank, Booker T. Washington, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Jane Addams, John Dewey, Louis D. Brandeis, George Washington Carver, Henry Ford, Helen Keller, Will Rogers, Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Wendell L. Willkie.

There are, you will notice, two Negroes. Both, Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver, surely earned their right to inclusion.

There are two women, Jane Addams and Helen Keller. Again, these earned their place.

There are two Democratic Presidents and two Republican Presidents.

Maybe you would substitute one or two others for one or two of the chosen. Before you do, read "Americans, a Book of Lives," by Herman Hagedorn, published by the John Day Company, of New York. You will find it unusually interesting and a valuable book of reference in regard to the lives of the 17.

Is 'Migration' the Answer?

Daily Worker New York

A Review of 'Marching Blacks'

Thurs. 3-21-46

By CLAUDIA JONES

Marching Blacks, by Dr. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., is a crusading document. As the newly-elected Congressman from the North, Dr. Powell's pen is reflective of his fearless voice. He has caught the mood and temper of the Negro people—that they are truly marching up freedom road. He reflects this recognition that their allies, particularly the CIO unionists, are to be found at their side. His is a plea that this increasing mass power must be used in all phases of American life.

The opening section of **Marching Blacks** dwells at some length on the fighting heritage of Negro Americans, up from slavery. The major lesson of that heritage is Powell's warning against caste disunities among the Negro people themselves. His is a plea and a recognition that inner unity among the Negro people will strengthen their cause; he notes that today, increasingly, the professionals march "with the domestic, the farmer and the mill hand." He parallels the current fight for equality, freedom and peace with the unfinished tasks of the Civil War, with fascism vs. anti-fascism!

Powell's entire book is frankly set forth as a program for Negro Americans. Particularly, in his chapter, entitled "Blacks Reborn," does the real starting point of his main thesis begin. That thesis is for mass migration of the Negro people from the South to the North.

Let it be understood, from the outset, that Powell's conclusions flow out of discussion of real problems. Here is discussed the St. Louis, Washington (D. C.), and Chicago riots which followed World War I. He recognizes that out of these incidents—in the "white heat of fury and anger"—Negroes and whites became conscious of the need for unity against the abuses of segregation and Jimcrow.

Evaluation of the Scottsboro case, is, according to Dr. Powell, "one of the most significant contributions to the race problem by the Negro and white man." Of this historic case, led and initiated by Communists, Powell says it was the signal for Negroes to demand fuller integration into all phases of American life; for whites to recognize what oppression meant within their own land.

But can Powell's thesis of "Turn Ye Northward" to the Negro people of the South be viewed realistically as a solution to the issues he so effectively crusades against — Jimcrow, segregation, second-class citizenship, lynchings, economic and social inequalities?

I definitely think not. Such a solution can only serve in these days of growing economic crisis, and unemployment to bring mass disaster for millions of Negro Americans. Powell urges ten million Negroes to leave the Southland. He argues that it will not mean "running away," that it will only accelerate a "natural process."

One should, however, distinguish between the right to leave and flight. It is my opinion that such a "solution" means mass

ADAM CLAYTON POWELL

escapism for the millions who are chained by poverty and oppression, cannot leave.

Perhaps Dr. Powell's "song of bitterness" which prefaces his detailed plan for Northern migration of the Negro people of the South best reveals what motivated his "solution." Powell views the problems that beset the Negro people largely as one of "race" rather than that of class and national oppression.

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Those progressive forces who challenge his solution recognize that only through the heightened work of the forces which Powell duly praises—the trade union movement, the Communists and the Negro people, can full freedom be achieved.

If Dr. Powell is impatient for progress, so are all true fighters for Negro rights, including the Communists, who fight for the full economic, social and political equality of the Negro people. But while viewing the fight for full freedom of the Negro people as a special question, we understand that only, as part of the over-all battle against monopoly capital, and the rulers of America, who exploit the Negro people and the working class (and are responsible for their plight) can freedom be completely achieved.

By all means then, the struggle should be accelerated. But the answer is not mass migration; but mass struggle. The kind of migration with which we can all agree, to paraphrase a verse of Langston Hughes would be "a migration into force and power" of the democratic forces of the South, the Negro people and the white working masses. They can and will retire the Rankins and Bilbos; and change the South to the true democracy which Powell also desires.

Thurs. 3-21-46

MARCHING BLACKS, By Dr. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Dial Press, New York, 218 p.p. $2.50.

On the whole, Marching Blacks has great positive value and should be read. It is, I believe, a sincere effort of an outstanding Negro leader to chart the course as he sees it. It should, in turn, be incumbent on those of us who see its shortcomings to improve on it; and to speed our efforts to solve the problems which Dr. Powell so challengingly places before us.

Negro Handbook The 1946 edition of "The Negro Handbook," compiled and edited by Florence Murray, will be published by A. A. Wyn in September. "The Negro Handbook" is a comprehensive record of current facts, statistics and general information about Negroes in the United States. The 1944 edition was prepared and published by the author with a Rosenwald Fellowship.

Book Boom for Negro Writers

Pittsburgh Courier

Pittsburgh Pa.

CHICAGO—(ANP) — The loud "boom" that keeps resounding in the literary world is the pay-dirt blast unknown Negro writers are making with national publishers, Doubleday and Company, editor Ducklin Moon reveals in "Book Boom," a message to race writing hopefuls in the April issue of Negro Digest.

"If you are a writer, have something to say and know how to say it, you will receive sympathetic attention from white publishers, any white publisher," says the author of "The Darker Brother" and "Primer For White Folks."

9 1946

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

By the Rivers of Babylon

LAY MY BURDEN DOWN. A Folk History of Slavery. Edited by B. A. Botkin. University of Chicago Press. $3.50.

"LAY MY BURDEN DOWN" is another of the fine legacies of the short-lived Federal Writers' Project. Over two thousand ex-slave narratives collected by Project interviewers were collated and arranged in seventeen volumes by the Library of Congress Project under the direction of B. A. Botkin. From this vast store, of prime interest to historian, sociologist, folklorist, and creative writer, Dr. Botkin has prepared for the general reader a selected "folk history of slavery," concentrating on oral, literary, and narrative values. The editor of *Folk-Say*, the regional annual that appeared in the thirties, and of the best-selling "Treasury of American Folklore" has chalked up another success in creative selection and integration.

The book is a new thing. It is unlike the reminiscences of ex-slaves that glutted the market with their imitations of Thomas Nelson Page's popular aunties and uncles, who alternated spirituals of adoration for old marse and missis with the blues of freedom. Slave loyalty and gratefulness are here, of course, since these many narratives include so many kinds of people, white and black. But they are by no means the ex-slave's chief concerns, and their opposites are here in plenty. Dr. Botkin is aware that in spite of instructions against editing and censorship, narratives were retouched; that the interviewers could yield to personal prejudices; that the informant, though nominally free, generally lived in a shadow of slavery where canniness pays off better than candor. Interviewers found the quick jump-back, the thrust and parry, the shocker stated with utmost blandness. One old man philosophized: "Lots of old slaves closes the door before they tell the truth about their days of slavery. When the door is open, they tell how kind their masters was and how rosy it all was. You can't blame them for this, because they had plenty of early discipline making them cautious."

The compulsion of the defender of the Old South to enumerate kind masters and that of the attacker to enumerate mean ones are not imperative here. "Lay My Burden Down" is no series of atrocities and certainly no idyl. If a few ex-slaves preen themselves on their easy life with quality white folks, the ease and quality run thin before the tale goes far. Miss Cornelia, for instance, "the finest woman in the world," would "throw dimes to the nigger children just like feeding chickens" on Sunday mornings; her finest act, it seemed, was to give out bread and butter between meals. One "bold, driving, pushing master but not a hard-hearted one" deliberately shot a slave woman in the cotton field. Probably more effective in conveying the tragedy of slavery than the inevitable accounts of sadism is the normal callous barbarity, casually administered and casually received. "Like I say, my master was a preacher and a kind man, but he had been taught that they was just like his work hosses, and if they act like his hosses they git along all right."

Does I member much 'bout the slavery times? Well, here is no way for me to disremember unless I die." The men and women who throng these remembrances are not walking allegories: the whites are not the old-stock gentlemen or the crinolined belles of the legend; the slaves are not the grinning, shuffling half-wits or the corpulent embodiments of loyalty and self-forgetfulness. We hear of slaves who cringed and of others who would never "take low." Slaves were always running off to the woods; one Alabama slave even hoped to meet up with "that Harriet Tubman woman." Few of the joys are described that made one critic of the plantation tradition liken the Old South to a perpetual Mardi Gras. The workaday world comes clear; the tanning, knitting, carding, spinning, cloth-dyeing, shoemaking, blacksmithing, plowing, hoeing, clearing of new land, the cultivating of tobacco, cotton, rice, and indigo, and the cooking of the famed diet of Dixie—all are specifically here. House servants are jostled by field hands, skilled artisans, and hired-out slaves whose income bolstered the pretensions of the gentlefolk. Large plantations are infrequent in this book; here instead are the not-so-big houses sheltering hard-pressed, pestered middle-class people on the make. We see the Southern frontier moving from the upland hills to Texas and the Indian Territory; we have records of masters as various as F. F. V.'s and Creek Indians. Hunting, fishing, church-going, preaching, politicking, gambling, dramming, wenching, making a living, wasting a living; life in the backwoods, the colonnaded mansions, the city houses, the slave quarters, the slave pens—all are recalled. And suddenly across the workaday fabric will flash the bright colors of melodrama—quarrels, fights, and murders. A slave boy in revenge for punishment reveals his mistress's clandestine love affair to the enraged master; a bitter woman rails because the children of the seamstress look so much like her husband; a black giant "not scared of nothing" is shot down "with a hole in his chest as big as your fist."

Unglamorized but gratefully remembered is the coming of the Yankees; the freedom they brought overcame the crude propaganda against them. Pictures of corncribs and ginhouses burning, of stock being driven away, of proud masters and mistresses humbled, are repeated. Hearing that the Negroes were free, some masters got sick unto death; one "bent himself over and never did straighten his body no more." A few slaves are remembered as staying on, "but the rest was just like birds, they just flew." Hard times did not end with the war, however, for the Ku Kluxers, peonage, and share-cropping took up where the hated "patterollers" and slavery left off. The insults and indignities of the present occasionally make the past more attractive. Some ex-slaves wish bygones to be bygones. "Most of 'em is dead and gone now. No matter whether they were Southern white folks or Northern white folks they is dead now." Others share the belief that "God is punishing some of them old suckers and their children right now for the way they use to treat us." A surprising number, considering their age and section, sympathize with the young folks who are hunting a better place and more freedom: "The first war was 'bout freedom and the war right after it was equalization." And to the question that is too often asked, one slave recognizes the "worriment" of the present, and admits that in slavery he had no worriment. "But I takes the freedom," he says. Almost all the ex-slaves, contrary to the legend, are of his mind. "They done seed both sides."

If a few of the reminiscences pull the long bow, or are jumpy and incoherent, or ingratiating, or told with tongue in cheek, still the total impact of "Lay My Burden Down" is one of convincing reality. Several of the tragic anecdotes have an elemental starkness; the comic yarns have a folk humor that minstrelsy has sadly corrupted. The dialect is simplified, stressing truth to cadence and idiom instead of sprinkled "wuzes," "oves," "disses," "dats," and inverted commas. It is salty, pungent folksay, beside which Joel Chandler Harris and Paul Laurence Dunbar seem too sweet and arch. Together with the fine photographs—the one on the jacket evokes the tragic reality of slavery as much as any picture can—the speech helps to restore human dignity to people whose history was nearly ruined by sentimentality and condescension and downright lying.

STERLING A. BROWN

Tale of South's Espionage

LODGING AT THE ST. CLOUD, by Alfred Leland Crabb. New York: Bobbs Merrill. 255 pp. $2.50.

IN THIS story of Confederate espionage, Dr. Crabb brings back for the delight of his readers many characters whom they have known before through the facility of his pen. Some of them are to be found playing adequate roles in his "Breakfast at the Hermitage," "Dinner at Belmont" and "Supper at the Maxwell House."

For example, there is Mrs. James K. Polk, wife of the President; Adelicia Acklen, mistress of "Belmont," the famed Nashville estate; General Nathan Bedford Forrest, and the humorous, ever-present but never quite identified "driver" who invariably turns up at the critical moment.

With these characters and new ones added to round out his story, Dr. Crabb plunges headlong into a thrilling story of espionage during the Union occupation of Nashville. There are many minor characters in the book who lend color and zest to the tale—characters such as the "fiddlin' man," and a smiling Negro boy, owned by General Forrest, who worked at the Hotel St. Cloud in order that he might help keep his master informed of Yankee doings in the town.

General Forrest's three spys—Captain Hume Crockett, Lieutenant Beasley Nichol and Sergeant Mack Goforth—carry the burden of the yarn, it is true, but Mrs. Polk, Berrien Lindsley, the minister, and the members of the Ladies' Hospital and Clothing Association, contribute delightful nuances.

The story opens with General Forrest's ace scout, Captain Crockett, in a filthy Federal prison in Nashville and the general is hopping mad about it. He sends Nichol and Goforth into town to rescue Crockett and en route they disguise themselves as Federal officers.

At the St. Cloud they run afoul an alera counterespionage, and from that time on the reader hardly has time to catch his breath. One of the three spies

Author 'Discovers' Negro

Chicago Defender

By EARL CONRAD

NEW YORK—Two most interesting young people called at my office this week and I am glad to introduce them to you. They are Mark Harris, 23, a white writer, whose first novel, "Trumpet To The World," was issued this week, and his bride of two weeks.

Young Harris has been living very intensively the past few weeks. Having one's first book come out at the same hour when one marries means that matters are moving eventfully; and when, as in the case of Harris' book the subject matter is of vital interest to the Negro group—and ought to interest white America—then it is all fodder for the maw of the Defender readers.

Harris' pretty blonde bride confided to your New York correspondent that her husband was such a prolific writer that she had fears he might personally — you know what I mean—tend to be equally prolific. Her husband looked up as she suggested that and asked her what she had said, and she answered, "Oh, nothing at all dear."

Full Of Idealism

Both are filled with idealism and good feeling and energy and hope and that's the mood that Harris packed into his book, according to the reviewers. Harris is pretty angry about the discrimination going on in "the land of the free" and he hopes to trumpet to the world that something ought to be done about it.

The big question in his mind is whether white America will take to his book, and that's the big question of all who write about the Negro theme. But he has the advantage that there's a remarkable upsurge of interest in this issue in the white world and as good things may happen to his product as have happened to Ann Petry's "The Street." 4-13-46

As a matter of fact, Harris and Miss Petry and Chester Himes just this week appeared together in a three-way discussion of Negro-white literature on the famous book broadcast of Mary Margaret McBride over NBC.

Harris, who wears glasses, looks scholarly, and is currently a newspaperman with the International News Service in St. Louis told me a couple of incidents that occurred at the broadcast.

It seems that right after the radio talk, a Virginia woman approached Harris, and, trying to convey how democratic she was, she discussed how she had gotten on a Virginia bus recently. She said: "Just the other day I was on a bus down home. I was sitting in the colored section of the bus. I got up and gave my seat to a colored lady and I went and sat in **my** section."

But an even better one than that occurred just a moment later. A North Carolina woman and her daughter were in the radio studio, and the mother, trying to impress Harris with the wonderful democracy of that State, said, "You know, in the South we take care of 'them' when they're sick, take soup down to their cabins and all."

But the woman's young daughter piped up, "Mother, we still talk about that, but you know we haven't done that for three generations."

It won't please folks in Dixie to know that Harris wrote his book while he was stationed at Camp Wheeler, Georgia. He began it early in 1944, and finished it last year.

"It was written after the story had batted around in my mind since entering the Army in January, 1943," he said. "I first noticed and became increasingly disturbed by racial segregation at Fort Dix, New Jersey, Fort Eustis, Virginia, Athens, Ga., Charleston, S. C., and then at Clemson, S. C., and afterward Camp Wheeler."

Saw Discrimination

Apparently Harris was observant enough to notice discrimination everywhere he went.

When I asked him what he wanted his story to achieve, he said, "I should like people to understand that by subduing a segment of our population we are, in fact, lessening our own (white) achievement. By making second-class soldiers of one large group we harmed our own war effort."

The caste system angers him. He says:

"It's too preposterous to discuss intelligently. In the U.S.A., we have maintained a color line despite scientific analysis which proves that color has no bearing on personality or morals, despite the fact that colored people have (in some cases) arisen above the system despite the rigid restrictions imposed upon them."

Like many other young people plunging into the interracial question these days Harris — and his wife too— see labor as one of the great answers. The writer says:

"White labor should know that their enemy is **not** the Negro worker, but the man, the big man (the capitalist, if you like), who attempts to divide and conquer.

Not Southern Question 4-13-46

"I think the hope of an improved interracial situation lies in intelligent labor organization, in reaching individuals in the school system, in creating pressure groups to awaken our politicians, to take part in politics and not to sit back and say, 'We'll never beat this thing.'"

The novelist doesn't think that "the race question" is a Southern question. "The world and certainly the country, is too small to have sectional problems. It is one world and one problem. The North is no more blameless than the South.

"I think it is true that the Negro has a 'place,' but it is not the kind of 'place' bigots think about. The 'place' is at the forefront of the democratic movement, hand in hand with labor and with other racial and religious minorities. The Negro understands the blessing of democracy. It is the task of the group, therefore, to show to other people (through the church, labor, political activity) how we can all benefit from a pure democracy."

Novel Is Gripping

Harris wasn't terribly conscious of the Negro people before he entered the service. Inside the Army he woke up: 4-13-46

"I remember early contact with the kitchen help at Clemson, and later with soldiers in Camp Wheeler. At first Negroes were reluctant to talk and to describe their feelings, but later, perhaps because I was naive enough to ask pointed questions, and perhaps because this somehow inspired confidence, I began to realize two things: Negro soldiers never told all they felt, and Negroes in general were a lot more angry than the vast majority of white people knew. It sometimes comes as a surprise to white people that Negroes hate, too.

"When I finally drew Negro people out and heard their stories and heard that they were disturbed by the very things which would have disturbed me, I saw fully the completely human reaction they had."

So Mark Harris, novelist of "Trumpet To The World" discovered that Negroes are human beings: and thus a book.

His book has been called "a gripping, graphic novel." And they say you won't want to put it down until you finish it.

MARK HARRIS

Army Life Book Free of Bias

The American Baltimore, Md.

BALTIMORE.

The AFRO was assured this week by Capt. Harry C. Butcher, USNR, author of "My Three Years With Eisenhower," that the material in the book about colored troops in the ETO would be 'proper" and "understanding."

In a recent issue of Saturday Evening Post five parts of Captain Butcher's diary were used, with the only reference to colored troops an incident in which a colored soldier is said to have testified at courts-martial, "I couldn't outrun them bullets."

Sat 12-4-46

Story Deleted

In a letter to Carl Murphy, AFRO president, Captain Butcher stated that in cutting the material for the book, he had deleted that particular story and that readers will not find the slightest racial bias in the book, so far as military operations in the European theater are concerned.

Mr. Murphy, after reading the Post excerpts, had informed Captain Butcher that in these serious days colored people are fed up with racial stereotypes and that the use of good grammar would have been just as effective in the story.

Racism and Politics In the Deep South

Daily Worker New York, N.Y.

Reviewed by Ben Miller

Few writers from the Claghorn country have been as devoted as Murrell Edmunds to the exposure of its native fascism. Last year, in a collection of a dozen short stories, "Red, White and Black," he showed a great range of interest in his fellow Southerners. He wrote of millworkers and sharecroppers, of organizers and college professors, of mothers and preachers and children—some of them white and some black. Separate stories, they fused into a fiery challenge to the economic system that has produced the human suffering he so compassionately reveals. Fri. 2-22-46

Out of one of those short stories, "Brothers," Edmunds has drawn his new novel, "Time's Laughter in Their Ears." It is the familiar mixture of racism and politics in a small southern town, but seen this time through the eyes of a 12-year-old boy.

The growth of Bobby's understanding, and of the courage to act upon it, provides a subtle means of penetrating beneath the surface of race relations. Bobby likes to go fishing with Slim, the Negro washerwoman's boy, and he cannot understand why such friendship is all right for kids, but becomes a deadly menace when developed between grown-ups. He begins to learn why when his uncle, Bob Henry, joins with Slim's older brother, Charlie, to organize the Negro and white sharecroppers.

CLASSIC PLOT TAKES SHAPE

Bobby's father, a college professor who writes books to prove slavery was a good thing, stands in his son's eyes in the usual role of protector. But Bobby discovers that when his father is playing local politics for the college presidency, he will repudiate even his own son.

The heart of the novel is the plot to get rid of the Negro organizer. Charlie has worked through a Northern college and returns home hoping to teach in the county's Jimcrow school. His ideas on racial equality stamp him an "uppity troublemaker," and, denied the chance to teach, he goes to work in the mill. When he finds a friend in Bobby's uncle and they begin to organize labor, the classic plot takes shape.

Moody Dan

THE ARISTOCRAT. By Genevieve Greer. 141 pp. New York: The Vanguard Press. $2.50

THIS book does not have many of the usual attributes of the novel: it does not tell a story, does not probe into personality, does not seem to reflect any particular philosophy or even mood.

There is a man named Dan who lives by himself in a ranch house in a Western State. Dan is a morose and unpredictable fellow, and although he has made a lot of money in his time, he is unhappy just the same. His most rewarding relationship is with Abe, a Negro errand of the travels to Arizona to bring his nephew are brother he had driven from his home and he becomes ill himself. While Dan is on this errand of mercy his niece and nephew are born there. The night after Ruth's child was born, she slashed her wrists with a razor blade and bled to death. * * *

One day Ruth told Dan that she was going to have a baby. * * * Dan took Ruth to St. Louis, and the baby, a boy, was born there. The night after Ruth's child was born, she slashed her wrists with a razor blade and bled to death. * * *

As he sat above the falls now he began to think about the child. * * * His son! How strange and wonderful that thought was.

The book ends with Dan's death and his nephew and the lawyer planning to have the niece declared insane so they can split Dan's money.

ALFRED BUTTERFIELD.

9 1946

Homespun Poems of the South

CLODS OF SOUTHERN EARTH. By Don West. 150 pp. New York: Boni & Gaer. $2.50.

DON WEST is a 36-year-old Georgia educator (son of a farmer) who expresses in verse his thoughts about the South. Mr. West is a homespun writer with a fondness for short-lined, free-verse compositions and with a strong didactic bent. Perhaps the best that can be said of Mr. West is that he is earnest and coherent. These are admirable qualities, but not sufficient in themselves to make a poet. His portrait of the South will, however, find favor in certain quarters.

In the South of Don West the great mass of workers, white and black, are oppressed by a small minority of land-owning Southerners and factory-owning Northerners. This minority has skillfully divided white worker from black by teaching them the phrases "poor white" and "nigger." Lynchings planned in the "big house" are craftily blamed on the "poor whites." It is a South "where hunger haunts both black and white," textile workers have "gaunt eyes, sunken cheeks," croppers totter down the cotton rows, sawmill workers die at their saws, mine workers in the pits, and brown-skinned workers dangle from the trees. But now a "slow growing anger" "born of toil and hunger" is abroad in the land and a day of "solemn judgment" is coming, in which white worker and black will clasp hands.

This is Don West's South and he sticks to it hotly through most of his poems and a twelve-page introduction. It is a romantic, simplified South which will be readily recognized by every schoolboy from Moscow to Vladivostok, but it has several features which will bewilder most Southerners, white and black—and especially those white "workers" who have just gotten through sending Bilbo and Rankin back to Congress.

NASH K. BURGER.

He Knows

The Constitution

Editor Constitution: After reading Harold Martin's recent article, "West Poems Raise a Controversy," and the attack on Don West by H. O. Tate, published in that article, I feel that you would be interested in knowing the truth about the attack, and my own opinion of Mr. West and his writings. My contact with him as my English professor, and discussions which I have had with him, inside and outside of class, lead me to believe and make these comments on his writings and beliefs.

Mr. West's first rule for writing is, "Write about something you know about, are sincere about, and have a burning desire to say." He lives up to his rule on writing. He writes about something he knows—the sharecropper, his father was one; the laborer, he himself slaved in a coal mine. We can all see the discrimination against the Negro, and Southern industry today, if we will open our eyes to them. He is sincere—his poems, his talks, his fight for a better Georgia prove that. He has a burning desire to say these things, and to see his State, our State, free from Northern industrial vampires, hooded orders, and corrupt politicians. He would have Georgia in a more Democratic state with equal opportunity and privileges for all, regardless of race or religion.

Atlanta, Ga.

These are the things Don West stands for. There's nothing communistic or un-American about these ideals, but there is something very much wrong with the Constitutional Educational League, which Mr. Tate said mentioned Mr. West. It and its leader were fully exposed in John Roy Carlson's book, "Under Cover," as anti-Jewish, anti-Roosevelt, pro-Fascist.

Fri. 11-15-46

BEN W. TILLER.
Oglethorpe University.

No Poet

The Constitution

Editor Constitution: I would like for you to publish the following letter in answer to a column of Harold Martin of Sept. 19, relative to Don West.

Atlanta, Ga.

Don West is not Superintendent of Lula High School, and hasn't been in two years.

He did not have anything to do with the erection of the Lula High School, it was a good school long before Don West was ever known by the people of Lula. I attended this school in 1911 and it was a good school then and has been a good school (accredited) all the while.

Mon. 11-4-46

I am a retired master sergeant of the U. S. Army and was at Pearl Harbor and Hickman Field when the Japanese first bombed there. And the song "My Country Tis of Thee" was one of the things that helped me to carry on, and I would like to show you just how Don West has butchered this good old song, and I quote:

"My country 'tis of thee,
Land of mass misery,
Of thee I sing;
Land where the workers toil,
And bosses reap their spoil,
Where children starve and freeze
From fall till spring."

Now I'm just wondering if we all went over and fought while a person like this was left behind to butcher up the good old songs of our country in this manner.

After reading Don West's book, "Clods of Southern Earth," you will see it is very un-American and not considered by me and others as poetry in the least.

I do not know very much about poetry but I do know plenty about the good old U. S. A. for which I fought.

LUTHER THOMPSON,
Lula, Ga.

Not Radical

The Constitution
Atlanta, Ga.

Editor Constitution: I have little patience with those who would crucify Don West. I don't believe Mr. West's poetry is any more "radical" or "red" than were expressions by such famous Southerners as Thomas Jefferson and the City Fathers of New Iverness (now Darien) in 1739. Jefferson, as everyone should know, carried on a campaign for the recognition of the human rights of Negroes, introducing the first legislation in this country for the manumission of the slaved. The City Council of New Iverness had this to say about the Negro in a resolution condemning slavery: "For they (the Negro) must have liberty as much as us. Therefore what bloodshed and chaos it (the lack of freedom) must bring about."

To us an American and a veteran, having fought ". . . that all men in all lands shall live out their lives in freedom from fear and want," it is fantastic that there still rests one person in this country who doesn't recognize the primary principle upon which our country was founded: That all men love liberty equally . . . Shall we heed the courageous and human voice of Don West? Or must we by our prejudice and ignorance and inhuman fear fulfill again the prophetic words of the New Iverness Council? Can there really be one sane man in this country who cannot make such a simple choice?

Mon. 11-18-46

BERT D. GILDEN.
Darien.

Poet to Poet

The Constitution

Editor Constitution: What's all this commotion about Don West and his "Clods of Southern Earth"?

"Clods of Southern Earth" is in many respects a very good book; and to my knowledge Don is a very good guy. He used to be a preacher, maybe he is still; at any rate he used to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and people will put up with any heresy but that. It is in the spirit of Christ that he lashes the money changers in his book. Don is an idealist (which seems to be a crime these days); only those who believe good can be accomplished lash out again evil. The rest of us perform the rites of the three unwise monkeys—whatever the plural of monkey may be—or watch the world go to hell with a cynical chortle.

We should all be grateful for such a person as Don West and for such books as "Clods of Southern Earth."

Atlanta, Ga.

Whatever Don's political belief may be his intentions are not subversive. His detractors very well know that no person or group could hope to get anywhere under a revolutionary title. If there is ever a revolution in this country it will come about under the auspices of one or the other of our two major political parties. It will probably start in the South, under the leadership of such blathermouths as point at Don West and scream, "Look, a Communist!"

BYRON HERBERT REECE.
Blairsville, Ga.

Sat. 11-16-46

Don West

The Constitution

Editor Constitution: While a visitor in Atlanta I've just lately read Don West's book, "Clods of Southern Earth." A few days ago a citizen of Lula, Ga., wrote how West butchers our "My Country 'Tis of Thee."

This is deplorable. I agree with him on that. It is poor taste to misuse or remodel this great American song. Such a parody on the song is degrading. Now a parody on "Yankee Beat the Rebel," or "Marching Through Georgia" would not specifically give grounds for complaint.

I'm no poetry lover. I do enjoy a merry jingle of humor, with it's climax, but I make no fair appraisal of the good or bad.

Many fine people were reared in North Georgia mountains. West wrote plainly of them. In Georgia it seems that many sections have been "unearthed" by Georgia writers themselves. To this, some people have taken exception, become embittered and feel it is a reflection on their own people who lived in those trying days.

Atlanta, Ga.

In some cases perhaps, the truth hurts. Some have jumped on their "high horse" immediately; when they've ridden the humble donkey. If the author of "Clods of Southern Earth" dug deep in Southern dirt, he shared, too, in the past miseries of hardships; and through determination rises to meet all adversities through life.

Wed. 11-20-46

EDITH WILLIAMS TILLER.
Moultrie.

For the Suffering

The Constitution

Editor Constitution: Several years ago my friend, Don West, was Pastor of a country church. At that time he was publishing a small periodical which had as its unwritten theme the words of Tennyson:

Atlanta, Ga.

"The wrong shall fail,
The right prevail,
With peace on earth, goodwill
to men."

Fri. 11-15-46

Because of the policy of both Pastor and periodical, my husband decided to unite with Don West's church. He liked the practical application of the Golden Rule and the hope for better conditions.

Since that time Don has climbed higher, but he hasn't forgotten the needs of those who are not so fortunate. That is what makes him a great man. He has no selfish motive. He is not seeking personal gain.

His enemies—for all great men have them—through their undeserved attacks boldly proclaim themselves to be callous and indifferent to the suffering of less fortunate people. Their motives seem very small and very personal. May I enter your forum and publicly ask Mr. H. O. Tate, of Lula, Ga., what stand he is taking to aid the suffering people of our State?

MRS. ROSINA H. SMITH.
Atlanta.

Fri. 11-15-46

Spokesman

The Constitution

Editor Constitution: Men like Don West do not come to such a maturity of thought as he has arrived at without sacrifice and suffering. Neither do they publish a book like "Clods of Southern Earth" in times like these without realizing in advance the possible cost to themselves. (What do you think?) Of course he has enemies—what man worth his salt hasn't? But Don West's enemies are of a special kind and they bear a special kind of hate—not alone for Don West, but for what he stands and represents for the future of our beloved Southland. They are the bitter, calloused, vicious, warped and evil minds of an element that would like to suppress the voice and destroy the person of men like Don West, and all others eventually, who stand for human decency. Do they not represent the same thing in America that the Nazi Storm Troopers did in the early Hitler period of Germany? The fact that H. O. Tate links himself with the Constitutional Educational League against Don West seems to me to bear out this point.

Atlanta, Ga.

The book reviewer of Chattanooga Times seems to me to have caught the spirit and significance of Don West's work better than anything I've seen in the following quotation taken from the Times' review:

Sat. 11-16-46

"There is a new voice from the Southland, the voice of a poet, a prophet and a preacher. It is the voice of a singer from the red hills of Georgia with feet set in its rugged soil and keen eyes far away on the future of his people . . . I think Don West's work will live. For it has the abiding value and virtue of true emotion truly expressed . . . "

Generations following ours will appreciate this man. Thousands upon thousands of our own generation have shown they also appreciate him as witnessed by the unheard of sales—for a book of American poety—that his book has enjoyed. Its sales have not been because of sensationalism in sex or other human degeneracy that so often smear the pages of

PROLETARIAN VERSE

CLODS OF SOUTHERN EARTH, by Don West. Published by Boni & Gaer; 148 pages, $1.

Birmingham, Ala. News

This kind of poetry belongs in political pamphlets or should be accompanied by a guitar as part of a Norman Corwin radio piece. It is pleasing even where it purports to be grim, but neither message nor expression will stand close scrutiny. The book is important because its intention, "A people's poverty," and Mr. West's affiliation with labor groups assure it a welcome where poems have seldom been taken seriously. The author is more interested in realizing his social philosophy than in throwing pearls to posterity, and there is actually no existing yardstick with which to judge his performance. The poems are about hill folk, share-croppers, miners and mill workers. They voice terrible resentment of the poor against less poor, not to mention the filthy rich, and the language of Georgia crackers, are as charming as anything Burl Ives ever sang in Atlanta.

Summary from Ala.

Ol' Rob Turner livin' all alone

In the head of Hoot-Owl Holler,
Never sees a body, never keers a body,
Never goes to meetin', never has a dollar . . ."

His use of picturesque phrases is at its best in "Crab-Grass," which ends:

"*Marthy won't let me see*
No peace,
Crab-grass, while ye come
A-peekin' thru the corn,
And the sun-ball burns me so
It's a botherment I'm born,
Crab-grass,
Allus pesterin' around!"

Sometimes the Georgia boy is an agitatin' Edgar Guest, with whole verses rushing carelessly towards the obvious rhymes at the end. Sometimes his enthusiasm causes him to show dubious taste, as in "Clodhoppers of the world, unite!" The tearjerkers about backs bent with toil, gaunt-eyed women, weary feet, calloused hands and "my lil' ol' mountain home" are happily offset by strong similes like "muscles bulged out like iron hoops on a whisky barrel." Sat. 7-13-46

One admires Mr. West, a man who has been around his subject matter, for finding nobility where nothing but weariness seems apparent. A founder of the Highlander Folk School, he bends over backwards to keep the faith.—MARY ELLEN CRANE.

Jack Conroy Off The Book Shelf

The Defender
Chicago, Ill.
Sat. 10-12-46

Vigorous Note

A NOVEL of the South with a lynch rope dangling down the length of its jacket is likely to inspire something like apprehension in the breasts of readers who have become a bit weary of the type of fiction such a symbol ordinarily heralds. Edward Kimbrough's "Night Fire" (Rinehart, $2.75), though its jacket displays the device mentioned above, strikes a refreshingly vigorous note—not an entirely new but on the whole an affirmative tone.

Young Ashby Pelham, a Mississippi aristocrat, hoots derisively at his father's romantic attachment to the dear, dead days of antebellum grandeur, but he has to a large extent earned his reputation as a careless playboy. His immediate response to a call for action when the life of Temp, a Pelham Negro, is endangered by potential mobsters, is to get well plastered and then to carry the embattled old retainer off with him in an automobile which he parks in front of a house of pleasure maintained by a faded gentlewoman who persists in the little illusion that her girls are guests in a genteel boarding house. While Temp cowers in the automobile, Ashby meets fate in the shape of a girl named Laurel. She's there under the mistaken impression that the place is what it seems to be from the outside. There is also a loneliness-harried man who later turns out to be Bevo Banes, a mill owner with a queer idea (for Mississippi, anyhow). He believes that white and black workers will get along amiably together in the mills if they are given the chance, and has by actual practice demonstrated the soundness of his belief. Negro-baiting Turkey Littlepage, the sheriff in charge of the manhunt for Temp, is also a guest of the hospitable establishment, illicit corn likker and equally illicit ladies being his principal sources of enjoyment.

Excuse for Rabble Rousing

TEMP'S alleged offense, trivial to begin with and involving a mulatto rather than a white girl, is used by Turkey as an excuse for some rabble-rousing. Ashby, Temp, Bevo, Laurel and a Negro woman are forced to seek refuge in a swamp. A forest fire precipitates a crisis in which the somewhat casual attitude of Ashby toward life is galvanized into a positive and aggressive social philosophy. Temp, too, is given the opportunity to demonstrate that dignity and courage are not exclusive possessions of the white race.

Kimbrough, a 28-year-old Mississippian who wrote "Night Fire" while the recipient of a Rosenwald Fellowship, is a representative of the conscientious and talented young white-skinned southern writers who are bound to redeem Dixie in spite of the Talmadges and Bilbos. Though unevenly written, his first novel is forceful—realistic without being morbid or sadistic. He recognizes that all Northerners and Southerners won't fit snugly into the respective categories of "angels" or "devils." Tinney, a mill operator, denouncing Bevo Banes for his revolutionary social theories, tells Ashby:

"I'm not a fire-eating Southerner . . . I'm from Chicago. Even had a grandfather fought in the Union Army from Illinois. . . . I don't think you can accuse me of having any prejudice about this question. I'm just a plain corn-fed fellow from Illinois. But I want to tell you that up there in Chicago we know there's a limit to how far you can let Negroes go. The real white men know that, and they've never hesitated to attend to any darkies that threatened to get out of line. Of course now, we've got a foreign element—Polacks and wops and sheenies—and some of them give Negroes big ideas, but just the same, we draw our lines up there, and we keep them drawn, I tell you."

I don't need to remind my readers that not a few other Chicagoans appear to have the same idea.

Lurid Tale of Dixie

Times-Dispatch
Novel of Nineteenth Century
Richmond, Va. Sun. 10-13-46

IN A DARK GARDEN, by Frank G. Slaughter. New York: Doubleday & Co. 435 pp. $2.75.

A "king size" novel entwined in nineteenth century history, this is well spiced with romance, licit and illicit, and has some excellent writing.

The author, a physician, writes with a keen scalpel, too, for you will have to undergo a great deal of surgery before you are through with the book.

Dr. Slaughter presents one Julian Chisholm, of "Chisholm's Hundred," on the Cape Fear River, in North Carolina. There are other Chisholms, too, but they are dealt with but lightly. Unless it be for Julian's brother's young widow, with whom Julian deals somewhat lightly, and vice versa. For Julian turns his back on the great plantation to pursue the study of medicine abroad. He is slugged and robbed in an alley, marries one Mrs. Jane Anderson to obtain his passage money home and, incidentally, so that she might get back into America more or less unobserved. Julian's closest friend, a young gambler, becomes the willing tool of the new Mrs. Chisholm, who has announced that it is merely a marriage of convenience and that she means to toss the whole thing away when they reach Georgia.

But things just keep happening and, of course, Julian falls in love with his wife eventually. But what a stirring tale this is: For Julian throws convention and reasoning aside to continue the fight for the Confederacy right in the bloodiest battle zone. His stormy encounters with his wife, who does not acknowledge their partnership, have given the author some of the best opportunities for clever handling; and he hasn't muffed them.

The "Dark Garden" is, of course, that feudal aristocracy of the ante-bellum South which was readying itself for decay when Julian went abroad. It is Jane, rich and clever despite her mountain "poor white" background, who helps Julian to plan for the "new garden."

There are some startling incidents in the passage which concern the brothers' war. Among them, Julian's meeting with the Yankee Negro doctor who has escaped, with Jane's help, from Andersonville prison pen, and the bushwhackers who follow Jane's lead so willingly and finally accept Julian after wanting to kill him.

The sex scenes, which are rather numerous and pretty graphic, have a certain part in the unfolding of the yarn. While they are not exactly ribald, it wouldn't have hurt the telling of the tale had they been not quite so lurid.

At its end, the story moves into Richmond, with some rich spying and counterspying, dueling and burning. Sun. 10-13-46

And, to be sure, some more operations.—R. G.

Georgia Chamber of Horrors

The Times Book Review

CROSS ON THE MOON. By John Hewlett. 316 pp. New York: Whittlesex House. $2.75.
New York, N.Y.

IT would be difficult for any one book to include a more astounding collection of the things that are wrong with rural Georgia than does John Hewlett's novel, "Cross on the Moon." Religious and sectional fanaticism, rape, pellagra, child marriage, racial prejudice, illiteracy, miscegenation, violence and hopeless vulgarity are a few of the afflictions which beset the town of Leafy Grove and its countryside. So highly selective (for the worse) is the material that the novel becomes a compendium of Georgia delinquency, a chamber of horrors of Talmadge-land.

"Cross on the Moon" is told in a slapdash, slapstick, anecdotal style, and read as farce it is often amusing (for example, the Methodist bishop's courtship of Miss Cora and that young lady's confession at a camp-meeting revival). It is sometimes wise (as in Dr. Smith's vision of Christ's appearance in Leafy Grove), often horrifying (as in the lynching of Punkie Brown, "the white folks' nigger"). If "Cross on the Moon" had stuck to its satire and burlesque, it might have done better. Mixed in with the cartooning is an element of earnest sentiment regarding the struggles of the boy Johnny Beane to live a normal adolescence in the madhouse of Leafy Grove. The two elements do not fuse. Leafy Grove is caricature. Johnny Beane is a snapshot made with a box camera. Johnny Beane's one white benefactor, the colloquial, profane, kind-hearted Dr. Smith is as close to a normal individual as the setting can absorb.

Dr. Smith was a graduate of the University of Georgia, and his ideas were more liberal than those normally held in Leafy Grove. "Ah'd a-been run outen Leafy Grove long ago iffen Ah warn't th' only doctor heah," he once told Johnny. It was he who finally caused Johnny to run away from home and his father's beatings. Sun. 9-15-46

Mr. Hewlett, a Georgian, must have a retentive memory or a very full notebook. His curious details of Georgia folk humor, dress, habits, speech, and just plain "orneriness" are awesome—and awful. Mr. Hewlett could probably cite chapter and verse for all the things he has put in his tale. But certainly no one town could supply them all, and at one time, as does Leafy Grove. It is this lopsidedness which will outrage some readers, cause others to chuckle, and, it is hoped, some from both groups to ponder.

NASH K. BURGER.

My Aching Back!

The Afro-American

Disobeying Father Divine Is Painful

Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—Refusal to obey the orders of Father M. J. Divine can have disastrous consequences.

At least that is the view of one of the cult leader's disciples as related by Marcus Bach in his book, "They Have Found a Faith" (Bobbs-Merrill Co., N.Y.C., $3), just published. Sat. 12-7-46

According to this disciple, an intelligent young boy, there were chairs to be moved at one time in the mission. "Let him move his own chairs," he said, "if he is God, that ought to be easy—to move chairs."

Like Pain of Fire

"Next day I had a pain across my back like the pain of fire. It wouldn't let up until I went and moved the chairs the way I should have done right at the start.

"Here's how I got it figured out. That's the secret and the mystery of Father God M. J. Divine"!

"I'll help you to good in the same way. if he can help you to bad, he can

9 1946

Books of the Times

The Times New York, N.Y. Fri. 11-15-46

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

THE shooting war is over, but John Roy Carlson is still waging his private war against America's Fascists. The young author of "Under Cover" has enlisted for the duration in a war which may well last as long as he lives. The five years of undercover detective work which supplied the material for "Under Cover" were one of the most important individual contributions made by any American writer to the cause of embattled democracy. All Americans who value liberty and love their country owe Mr. Carlson a debt of thanks. That debt is increased today by the publication of a sequel to "Under Cover," a book which takes up where the first left off and exposes the continued activity in the postwar world of many of the same obnoxious vermin who were Hitler's best American friends before Pearl Harbor. The book is most appropriately entitled "The Plotters."*

John R. Carlson

Mr. Carlson is not a particularly smooth or expert writer. Both his books are repetitious, monotonous, thrown loosely together rather than integrated into a unified whole. But literary graces are not important virtues for such books. What matters is their authentic and specific information. This "The Plotters" has in abundance. Mr. Carlson is a shrewd and tireless investigator. He collects subversive pamphlets, magazines and newspapers with indefatigable zeal. He writes "come-on" letters with all the guile of an agent provocateur who knows his quarry from long and intimate acquaintance. And with the bravado of a Dick Tracy he beards his victims in their lairs, sometimes incognito and sometimes defiantly as the hated author of "Under Cover." All this lends an impressive documentation to "The Plotters."

Cites Chapter and Verse

This book does not consist of mere righteous indignation, but of chapter and verse, verbatim quotations, photostatic records, eyewitness descriptions.

"So far as psychological propaganda against our democracy is concerned," says Mr. Carlson, "Hitler is by no means dead. Hitlerism in our country is a sinister and expanding reality."

Wearing many disguises, most of them quite transparent, Hitlerism always insists that it is Americanism, patriotism, nationalism of an exalted variety. But extremes of nationalism are only other aspects of the appeals to hate and fear and prejudice which are the true basis of fascism. So today there are at large in the United States thousands of individuals who preach the poison of hatred through hundreds of organizations and publications.

The crackpots, mentally retarded unfortunates, paranoiacs, misguided fanatics and just plain goons and gangsters always insist on their Americanism; but when examined their Americanism can be seen to consist of zenophobia, white-supremacy, anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism, anti-unionism, anti-communism and even anti-democracy and anti-capitalism. Mr. Carlson cites examples of all such aberrations, from such conspicuous ones as the revival of the Ku Klux Klan and the activities of such agitators as Gerald L. K. Smith, Gerald B. Winrod and Mrs. Elizabeth Dilling to such comparatively obscure but equally vicious organizations as the Order of the Golden Eagle and the United Sons of Dixie and such "leaders" as Frederick Kister and "Chief New Moon."

Mr. Carlson insists that the principal aim of all American Fascists today is to enlist the support of the veterans, and he estimates that 5,000,000 veterans are sufficiently gullible to be likely victims of their blandishments. With the 15,000,000 bigots he estimates to be convinced "nationalists" or Fascists already, that makes a threat to our freedom which must not be underestimated. And the worst of it is, according to Mr. Carlson, not all our American Fascists are ranting plug-uglies. Some of them are persons of education, position, wealth and influence. Some of them, he suspects, are connected with such seemingly respectable organizations as the Constitutional Educational League, the National Economic Council and American Action.

Scores Cited by Name

There are scores of men and women cited by name in "The Plotters." The women, says Mr. Carlson, with their "mother" organizations, are often more rabid than the men. Many of the most virulent peddlers of hate do so in the name of religion. The Fundamentalist Christian War Veterans of America is a disgrace to Protestantism and the Rev. Arthur W. Terminiello, who has been suspended from his office and duties by his Bishop, is a disgrace to Catholicism, according to Mr. Carlson.

In addition to exposing Fascists of all varieties, Mr. Carlson has investigated other groups that have been called subversive. He finds that the Communists are just as subversive as ever. He has looked into the CIO and labor unions generally, and except for individual dictators like James C. Petrillo and Joseph P. Ryan, he awards them a completely clean bill of health. He also approves of the principal veterans' organizations, but among the hundreds of other alleged veterans' organizations he suspects that some may be Fascist wolves in sheep's clothing.

"The Plotters" does not make enjoyable reading. Its catalogue of unsavory individuals grows quite tiresome. Its prose is far from alluring. But as another blow in a good fight it is as important as "Under Cover."

A Sensitive novel by Mr. Coates, Civilian

The Bitter Season: A novel by Robert M. Coates (Harcourt, Brace and Co., $2.50).

By Toger Pippett

A man of his early 40s walks the streets of Manhattan during those jittery months that preceded D-Day and feels lonely-and vaguely guilty-because he isn't with the boys who are about to land on the beaches.

Like most men of good good will in a crisis, he is confused. He really hates war, seeing "no good in it either as a solver of problems or as anything else." Yet he realize clearly that the war must be fought and won Also, as a writer, he confesses that war fascinates him. He follows the fighting avidly in the papers, on the radio and in the newsreels, seeking, even at second hand, to experience the violence and the fierce pressures. His sense of frustration, he feels, may be caused by the fact that he was too young to see active service in World War I.

Feeling of triumph

But after all, he asks himself, isn't that very feeling one of the reasons why war seems to be self-perpetuating? Aren't there always youngsters growing up just in time to be enticed by the excitements of war while still "safe" from its dangers? Why, he can never see a bunch of kids playing commando, going *ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah* or diving imaginary bombers among the ashcans without thinking, "There go the war-makers and the warriors of a generation from now. . . ."

The man of good will has based all his adult thinking on the belief that there is no real difference between the American, the Frenchman, the Englishman, the Dane and the German. But he finds that he can't escape a delightful feeling of triumph and of identification when, in a newsreel, he sees an American do something that is, at the same time, courageous and—how else can he put it?—American.

There was that shot taken during the fighting at Anzio—men wading, through the surf in the gray dawn, and the shore itself blurring as the camera jumped with the shell concussions, and the face of a soldier turning to say something to someone behind him, so that, for an instant, his eyes seemed to look straight into the eyes of the man of good will. "The soldier was quite tall and rangy, with that long-armed, loose-elbowed ranginess that only the Americans seem to have." And. as he turned back again, he grinned.

Concerned and insecure

It was nothing, really. . . . Maybe if the man had met the soldier, he would have disliked everything he thought and stood for, from his opinion on baseball to his attitude to women. Maybe he was a Republican, and maybe he was a Democrat.

But his grin was "the wide, rather tight-lipped, half-bashful grin of an American," and it gave the whole incident focus. In that instant, the soldier was the man of good will. The sense of identification was so sharp in the man that it was almost pain. And the knowledge that now he would never know what happened to the soldier, that was pain indeed.

And so he wanders, concerned and insecure, recalling the girls he has known, thinking of the woman with whom he has fallen in love, but always returning to the obsession of the war, retreating again and again into the steadying conviction that it is important for him to keep on doing the things he can do, emerging to listen to his radical friends and to be clawed at by the talk of his neighbors in restaurants and bars:

"Well, these Negroes had their day, and, from what I hear, they damn well made the most of it. I hear England, for instance, is full of picanninies. But it's time now to show 'em they can't keep on being so uppity for ever. . . . Well, the Jews. . . . Oh, but mind you, we had some Jews here for Christmas. . . . . Oh, these farm boys, I know them. In the Army they had shoes on, maybe for the first time in their lives. Now they'll be barefoot again—and love it."

Once, when the man of good will was a boy, he thought he could "get around" death as he got around his homework. Now he knows better. Death is absolute and everywhere:

"'HEART OF BERLIN SET AFIRE IN 2000 PLANE YANK ATTACK. NAZIS ADMIT VAST DAMAGE. HITLER REPORTED INSPECTING WESTWALL," said the headlines. And there was more news than that, of course. *'Two Men Mug and Rob Crippled Girl. . . . 90,000 to See Derby, Stir-Up Still Favorite. . . . Officials Blamed for Diminishing Liquor Supply.'* Back on page 21, Westbrook Pegler was saying, 'On one occasion when Mrs. Roosevelt went to Maine to christen a barge. . . .'"

A kind of death

There were times when he felt that Westbrook Pegler "represented a kind of death, too." And there were times, "funny times," when he felt fine. There was that night in the dim-out, at East 23d Street and Lexington, when the Negro in Navy blues, very drunk and very cheerful, got everyone singing.

Keep a Song in Your Soul, he was singing, "an old one, to be sure, but it has a good, solid, pumping rhythm. . . . He was giving it all he had." "'*When the dark clouds gather 'round, all your castles tumble down.*'" Then he broke off and waved his arms at the few passers-by, "Castles tumblin' down all over the world, folks," he said. "Everywhere but here. Here and we're singin'. Come on, folks, now you? Get singin'."

People stopped to listen and then to hum. The man of good will found himself

Praise the Lord

Finally the Negro, the students following him, headed for the Third Avenue El stairs, "steep and dark as a mountain pass." They were still singing when they came out on the platform, though they had changed to *Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition* and then to *In My Arms.* Down below, listening to them, the man of good will thought they all sounded

have reviewed this novel instead of trying

New York, N.Y. Sun. 10-13-46

to communicate its episodic manner and its authentic mood. Mr. Coates is to blame. He still has me listening to those singers up there on the El.

Books of the Times

The New York Times.
New York City.

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

ALTHOUGH the weapons of war become more frightful with each generation, the underlying realities of war remain much the same. Since the siege of Troy each soldier has had to fight his private battle with his individual fear; and war itself has been compounded of waiting, incomprehensible orders, bad food, bad weather and bad tempers as well as of the bloody business of killing. John William De Forest, who was a captain in the Union Army during the Civil War, felt about soldiering exactly the same way as millions of American soldiers have felt since. His observations on his experiences may be found in "A Volunteer's Adventures,"* one of the most readable and realistic chronicles ever written by a veteran of this country's great trial by fire. Tri. 6-28-46

De Forest was a Connecticut Yankee, a professional writer of travel books and novels, a former invalid and traveler in Europe and the Near East. He was probably the most talented literary man to see action in the Civil War. His more talented contemporaries, Mark Twain, Henry James, Herman Melville, et al., were not soldiers. Only Walt Whitman among America's great nineteenth-century writers came close to the suffering and sacrifice of the war, and he was a hospital nurse, not a combatant. De Forest drew upon his experience for his most famous novel, "Miss Ravenal's Conversion From Secession to Loyalty." Some of the same material is repeated in this book, which is now printed for the first time.

Literary Civilian Despite Uniform

"A Volunteer's Adventures" consists of De Forest's letters to his wife and selections from his journals and his magazine articles. It is an extraordinarily intimate, informal, realistic narrative. De Forest was a good soldier who never failed to do his duty, even when his duty seemed foolhardy or silly to him. He always retained the point of view of a literary civilian. He could be as sarcastic about blundering lieutenant colonels and the ritual of military organization as any peevish GI. But he kept his writer's acute interest in the psychology of men under fire, their language (their "swearing mania" he called it), their behavior and even their expressions.

His adventures fell into two chief divisions, those as a line officer in Louisiana and those as a staff officer in the Shenandoah Valley. In Louisiana he was part of Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler's army, which occupied New Orleans. Of his boredom while drilling and awaiting the attack on an island in the Gulf he wrote: "It is a healthy, monotonous, stupid life and makes one long to go somewhere, even at the risk of being shot." Later, when he was posted at a camp in the heat and dust and fevers of Louisiana, he felt more strongly. Officers were supposed to buy their own food and clothing with their pay. But the pay was often months in arrears. The hungry captain often envied his men their Army rations. Only plundering by runaway Negroes kept him alive.

De Forest's descriptions of forced marches in the tropical heat, of drunken soldiers, of deaths from "swamp fever" and of the "cruel punishments" of the courts-martial on which he was forced to serve are as grim and eloquent as anything written of more recent wars. He had no illusions about war itself. "Something like one-fifth of the men who enlist are not tough enough nor brave enough to be soldiers." There were always "skulkers," who ran or hid during battle and had to be beaten with the flats of swords. But fear can be controlled. "In general, the terror of battle is not an abiding impression, but comes and goes like throbs of pain; and this is especially the case with veterans who have learned to know when there is pressing danger and when not."

But, like most soldiers anywhere and any time, it seemed to De Forest "perfectly natural that others should be killed and that I should escape." He had a theory, too, about courage. "I have discovered why officers are in general braver than soldiers. The soldier is responsible for himself alone, and so is apt to think of himself alone. The officer is responsible for his company, and so partially forgets his own peril." But fighting itself, though thrilling in a charge or a victory, could not be a pleasure. "It is just tolerable; you can put up with it; but you can't honestly praise it." Tri. 6-23-46

Bungled Siege of Port Hudson

De Forest's most interesting chapters concern the bungled siege of Port Hudson, on the Mississippi River. That now-almost-forgotten battle was in its way almost as desperate and bloody as the siege of Vicksburg itself. When he came to his service under Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley, De Forest wrote with equal realism and with an equally sharp eye for significant detail, but his staff job deprived him of the sense of participation of his earlier chapters of front-line combat.

He noticed two strange officers. "They were undersized men, rather squarely built, but not portly nor even heavy. The junior, who was also the shortest, had a distinctly Irish face of the puffy sort, with irregular profile and a swarthy complexion. He talked in a low silvery voice (the words quite inaudible to me), his elbows pressed to his sides, but gesturing slightly with his fingers. The elder man, blond and sandy-bearded, his red-oak features perfectly inexpressive, his gray eyes fixed on the ground, listened without replying.

"'That youngest one is our General Sheridan,' said the sergeant. 'Don't you know who the other is? That's Grant!'"

Yesterday And Today

Earl Conrad

Defender Chicago, Ill.

Jim Crow America

MY FORTHCOMING BOOK, "Jim Crow America," which, I hope, will help dynamite the whole issue of white supremacy and racist reaction in the country, has gone to the printers and will, for several months, be going through printing and editorial processes. It takes about six months to produce a book, after the writing is completed, and that is fairly fast work, for a great deal has to be done with a volume before it reaches the public. It is due to appear early in 1947; probably in January.

Sat. 9-28-46

Some time ago I asked my readers for a title suggestion and I was pleasantly surprised to receive about 35 letters filled with interesting suggestions. I answered most of these letters, but there are still a few I haven't taken care of, and I hope my readers will understand that it was the pressure of writing around 80,000 words in two months that made it necessary to forego some obligations. The payoff on that is that I finally hit on a title myself.

There are many books on, by, and about the Negro now "in the works." Margaret Halsey, a white author, who has written for Negro Digest, is issuing a book this week. George Lipscomb, co-author with Shirley Graham of "George Washington Carver" will have a new book to his credit in a few weeks. It is a juvenile called "Tales From the Land of Simba," and I'm happy to say it is dedicated to my youngster, "To my little friend, Michael Conrad." I understand Lillian Smith and Bucklin Moon have books coming up soon too, and then there is a novel, "Jule," by George W. Henderson, a Negro writer which will appear in a couple weeks. I believe that Dr. Alphonse Heningburg has a book which will appear this fall too. It seems that the book industry has genuinely opened up on the Negro question and I expect this outburst to have great political consequences in 1947. I almost forgot Edmund Fuller's biography of Frederick Douglass which is due to appear within a few weeks too.

I think that the fall of 1946 and the year 1947 will be memorable in literary history as representing a period of realization of the "Negro question" in literature.

Conscience Touched

It should be clear that the conscience of white America has been touched. Book publishing is pretty much a barometer of political and social trends in the country. Sooner or later the book publishing industry reflects whatever is going on in the country. In general there is more "freedom of the press" in the book field, perhaps because there is more competition to reach the book market. Book publishers are more experimental than newspaper and magazine publishers. They do not hue to political lines quite so narrowly as do newspaper publishers.

The editors in the book field, I believe, are often more liberal and have more leeway in what they shall publish than do newspaper and magazine editors. In the nature of book publishing, the editors have to look for "the unique" and this element has been helpful in breaking open the Negro question.

The present renaissance has been slow in coming. It has been brewing ever since the mid-1930's and has taken about ten years to hit with force. It is possible for some of these books to become social factors of great consequence and to influence political developments.

As far as I know mine is the only book in this group which undertakes to deal with the entire system of anti-Negro discrimination. The exclusion of the Negro in the United States has been evolved systematically in every sphere of society and I have undertaken to portray each of the major tentacles of what I have called "the octopus of Jim Crow." I intended mainly for the reeducation of white Americans, still, I feel that the economic and political implications of the book should interest the Negro quite as much. I am not dealing with "inside Negro America" material, but rather "inside white America" as it has plundered the Negro.

Recommends Book

WHILE I AM encroaching on Jack Conroy's department I'd like to recommend a book which appeared a few weeks ago. It is A. G. Mezerik's "Revolt of the South and West," a Duell, Sloan and Pearce publication. Mezerik makes the same point I have been iterating lately in the Defender, that a new political coalition is developing in America and that it should be hastened. He refers to the "corporate aristocracy" of the East dominating the South and West and holding it in colonial bondage. If the South and the West can be brought into alliance with the progressive North the "common man" will go forward, and this would be highly meaningful for Negro Americans. Mezerik adduces facts and figures to confirm his position and I regard his book as an important symptom of the new-growing political awareness of the South and West. Mezerik brings in the "Negro question" forcibly at several points.

Aptheker Assails Myrdal Race Study

The Defender
Chicago, Ill.

MINNEAPOLIS—Gunnar Myrdal's "American Dilemma," purporting to be a study of the American Negro, was sharply attacked here last week by Herbert Aptheker, New York student of Negro culture, in a speech terming the Swedish sociologist's treatise "slanderous." Sat. 12-7-46

Aptheker, who seared the book in a Washington speech recently, attacked the Carnegie-Foundation-financed "race study" for repeating myths of Negro passivity and white beneficence.

Required reading for University of Minnesota sociology students, the book, Aptheker told his audience here, "credits the granting of educational opportunities to Negroes of the South to the benevolence of the whites. The opposite is true. The white masters fought giving the Negroes any schooling in slave days and it took the Civil War to win the Negroes' right to an education as well as emancipation."

Aptheker, who holds a Columbia University doctorate in philosophy, is the author of several books and numerous pamphlets.

Lucas' Book on '3rd Ward' Is Hit

The Courier

NEWARK—(ANP)—A promising young author made his debut here last week at the swank Hotel Robert Treat, when Curtis Lucas of this city told newspapermen why and how he wrote his exciting first novel, "Third Ward Newark," which was published on Nov. 30 by the Ziff-Davis Publishing Company.

Georgia-born Lucas, 32, who came to this city in 1942, told a press conference composed of local and nearby dailies and weekly

"Third Ward Newark" will be the American city "Harlem" of another

Sat.
Chicago Defender
12-14-46

the January selection of the Negro Book Club.

9 1946

S. I. Hayakawa

Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 10-5-46

Second Thoughts

Quality

AS A NOVEL, "Quality," by Cid Ricketts Sumner (Bobbs-Merrill, $2.75), is conservative in form. It starts quickly and deftly with the girl stepping off the train in a small Mississippi town and moves with an even, expert pace through narrative developments that culminate in a dramatic court scene. It ends with a triumph and a disaster, but the disaster is not total, for there is hope in the future — the future into which the girl and the young medico she is about to marry march bravely as the story ends.

Does this sound all too familiar? But it is nevertheless a fresh, new story with a fine punch, because the girl is an extremely light-colored Negro, educated since childhood as a white in the North, and returned to Mississippi because she had to run away, after finishing her nurse's training, from the complexities of her racial situation. The theme of the novel is her adjustment to the fact that she is Negro—for her childhood and her surroundings had never given her a chance to become a full member either of white or Negro society. She flounders helplessly in the South, humiliated by whites who are her inferiors, rejected by the underprivileged Negroes whose life she cannot share, but gropes her way back to self-integration with the help of her Negro grandmother, a perceptive white woman, and her professional training.

Chicago, Ill.

Vivid Cast of Characters

THE CHARACTERS are skillfully drawn: the splendid illiterate grandmother; the semiliterate village Negro "leader," alternately assertive and cringing, not happy about resigning himself to a thoughtless lower class Negro existence, but without training or assurance enough to achieve much else; the brilliant, cocky reporter from the northern Negro newspaper, militant, not too scrupulous, but brave and resourceful in his fight for Negro justice; the viciously prejudiced white society woman whose avarice is aroused by antique furniture; the silent, dying white woman of old family to whom character is more important than race; the Canadian Negro physician, who, brought up in a different environment, has the detachment to face things when others are in hopeless rage or despair.

Reporters for the Chicago **Defender** and other northern weeklies may bridle somewhat at Mrs. Sumner's characterization of the Negro reporter. It is obvious that the author does not believe in the value of his almost professional truculence and belligerency. But I cannot feel that her disapproval need be resented, because she shows sympathetic understanding of how he gets that way. And her little sketch of his contemptuous attitude toward the semiliterate Southern Negro is impressively true to life. If newspapermen have a professional failing, it is their tendency to feel that they know all the answers—and this is just as true of Negro newsmen as it is of others.

Sat. 10-5-46

The thesis of the novel (if we insist on reducing it to a thesis) is that race relations will improve when there are better white people and better Negroes, and that the value of legislative remedies is often over-estimated. Although this thesis is largely true, its chief trouble is that far too many unreconstructed Southerners who aren't doing anything to improve anybody employ it is an argument to oppose all remedial legislation, even such urgently necessary measures as those permitting federal action against lynchers.

A Present for White Friends

I HOPE that this superficial resemblance between the views of Southern reactionaries and those of Mrs. Sumner will not mislead anyone. For the total effect of her novel will be to enlarge people's sympathies, not to close them. One knows, through her, how it must feel to be a Negro woman subjected to the obscene brutalities of Southern policemen. One understands what it must mean in hopelessness and agony to have all force, public opinion, and even law ganged up against you—as it almost inevitably is if you are a Negro in Mississippi.

Off The Book Shelf

Jack Conroy

Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 9-28-46

"Quality"

NOT A few readers, I'm sure, will sense the spirit of Booker Taliaferro Washington and his "let down your bucket where you are" philosophy hovering among the pages of Cid Ricketts Sumner's "Quality" (Bobbs-Merrill, $2.75). Washington's conciliatory policy toward the Southern whites is regarded nowadays by most militants as degrading appeasement, and so will the actions of certain Negro characters in Mrs. Sumner's novel appear to uncompromising ones.

We first meet Pinkey Johnson, granddaughter of Aunt Dicey Johnson, on the train coming back from Boston, where she has been trained as a nurse—and also tacitly "passing." When the people at the Northern school mistook her for white, Pinkey didn't have the heart to set them right. She became Patricia, and added a "t" to her surname. Complications multiply when a white doctor falls in love with her and she finds herself reciprocating his affection, surmising uneasily all the while that a Canadian Negro doctor in the same hospital is aware of her subterfuge.

Her immediate (and makeshift) solution is to flee precipitately back to Liberty Grove, Miss., and her black and illiterate old grandmother, the faithful retainer of Miss Em of the big house nearby. Miss Em's estate has gone to pot and she can pay no wages, but Aunt Cindy's devotion is not governed by money, and each day she trudges faithfully along the well-worn footpath to the decaying mansion.

First Hand Picture

PATRICIA, Pinkey again as soon as she sets foot in her native village, is given at first hand a realization of the lot of the Negro woman, pretty or ugly, learned or ignorant, in the South. As long as she is believed to be an attractive white girl, taxi drivers, shopkeepers and policemen treat her with true magnolia-scented courtesy. When they discover her racial identity, she at once becomes a wench who must submit to being slapped around as a matter of course. Pinkey has an inadvertent run-in with a razor-wielding domestic which results in the two women, along with the belligerent one's husband, being brought before a judge. His Honor has a half-sympathetic attitude toward Pinkey because her grandmother is a model of behavior —a salutary example for the other Negroes of Liberty Grove. The Negro husband is reprimanded for his agitating for equal rights. The black firebrand does a little abject Uncle Tom-ing to extricate himself.

Pinkey sees plenty of opportunity to put her nurse's training to good use among her people, but she spends a great deal of time repining for her white lover and rebuking her long-suffering grandmother for her predicament. Aunt Dicey points out, accurately enough, that she never recommended the "passing" business which seems to be the cause of all the trouble. A crusading Negro newspaper reporter visits the cabin and manages to shake Pinkey out of her lethargy a bit. A showdown with her lover, who has tracked her down, still under the impression that she is white, reveals that his calibre is not fine enough to stand the test of real adversity. When Miss Em dies and wills the big house to Pinkey for her services as a nurse during the impecunious aristocrats' last illness, good and bad elements among the town's white people come to the surface. The climax seems to justify Aunt Dicey's argument that the bad whites often shame the good whites into treating the Negro more decently.

Persuasive Argument

"QUALITY" first appeared in Ladies Home Journal and has some of the slick and saccharine character one may expect there. Nevertheless, it is a rather persuasive argument for the thesis that the future of race relations in the South depends upon the sentiments in the hearts of "quality" folks both black and white, and not upon violent and drastic legal changes in the Southern social pattern.

The whole state of Mississippi blows up in an atomic explosion, but most people don't care much inasmuch as Bilbo and Rankin went skyhigh along with the rest of the sorry commonwealth. But when it is learned that radioactive rays from the blast have spread around the world, sterilizing all the men—that's something to get excited about. One very ordinary chap named Homer Adam, down in a lead mine at the time, has been insulated from the deadly rays and thus is the only potential father on earth—unless we believe the rumors about the two Mongolians in Russia spared by the same kind of circumstances. Homer becomes the most valuable property in the United States. His experiences form the basis for Pat Frank's "Mr. Atom" (Lippincott, $2.50), a hilarious satire with not a little shrewd social commentary thrown in.

The Birmingham Reviews

A SUPERIOR NOVEL

QUALITY, by Cid Ricketts Sumner. Published by Bobbs-Merrill Company; 286 pages, $2.75. Birmingham Ala

It has remained for Cid Ricketts Sumner, from Brookhaven-in-the-heart-of-Mississippi, to write what is in many respects the most profound approach yet made to the race issue. A novel with a bad title, "Quality," is a superior piece of literature from all angles. More than that, it carries a message which offers sanity and understanding to anyone who wants his eyes opened. This book does not have the emotional impact of "Native Son," nor does it carry the sensual appeal of "Strange Fruit." Consequently it permits the reader to see through hatred and oppression to the very heart of the matter. There is criticism for all concerned. Above all, there is hope for the Negro.

Dicey Johnson, old Negro "mammy," sends her granddaughter Pinkey to school in Boston. Mistaken for a white girl, Pinkey "passes." As she completes training as a graduate nurse, a white doctor falls in love with her. With the date for the wedding set, she senses resentment from her own race and scorn from the whites. She flees to Liberty Grove, Miss., and the hut of her grandmother. Soon she encounters Arch Naughten, writer for Northern Negro publications, who works with certain organizations and feels that publicity for each incident of discrimination is the proper approach. He seeks to persuade her to join his crusaders. As she deliberates, old Dicey is militantly opposed. "You pays for your freedom, that's what," she says. "Me, I don't give that up for nothing. I want to get my own job; I want to stand on my own feet and take care of myself. Don't want nobody telling me."

Aug. 31-1946

Pinkey sees her people as simple, ignorant human beings, still uninhibited in their emotional expression, to whom the law is not a refuge and protection, but an enemy to fear and to flee. As kindly Judge Walker puts it: "You have taken on the standards and restraints of a civilization in which you are allowed few of its rewards." It is the friendship of such people as Judge Walker and Dr. Joe which gives strength and tolerance to Pinkey. Dr. Joe repeatedly mutters that when he operates they are all like under the skin. When confronted with the question of social equality he says: "There isn't any such thing, so far as personal relationships go. I mean we are going to invite into our home and marry the people who are like ourselves, and nobody can change that—it's a matter of personal liberty. . . . We're not so afraid of intermarriage as we make out—after all, people tend to marry their own kind."

Sat 8-31-46

Pinkey's training as a nurse causes her to see in magnified perspective the deplorable health of her people. More than anything else, she wants to help them. But is that more important than the vigorous movement which Arch advocates? Must she accept the job offered by Arch? As she tries to make up her mind, Pinkey is forced by her grandmother to nurse the dying Miss Em, who had been unkind to Pinkey as a child. It is Miss Em who clarifies the girl's confusion. "You overestimate suffrage and civil rights," she says. "Look at me. I have suffrage. I have civil rights. But I am chained to this chair, this room, by age and infirmity. Just as the colored people are chained by ignorance, poverty, low standards of manners and morals, lack of medical care." Railing against talk and publicity that embitters and inflames, she says: "It is as if a man were sick unto death and all the doctors gathered together to describe his symptoms, to argue about his treatment, to advocate laws forcing him to recover. Meanwhile the patient is

dying." Miss Em contends that you can't raise up a man by increasing his political powers, but must start at the bottom. "Give him character, competence, health."

In this book—with the suffering which Pinkey endures and the courage she displays, aided by the friendship of Southerners who acted out their words—Miss Sumner reaches the heart of the issue. Every word she writes is true. But there is more to be said. For instance, as we reach to the base of the structure of greed and intolerance by providing education, material aid and personal understanding, we must at the same time carve through the legal jungles a pathway for the Negro to follow once he reaches maturity. These things must go hand in hand. Emancipation in fact will give him the incentive to become worthy of the position he desires.—CHARLES WHITE McGEHEE.

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa. Sat. 8-17-46

UNCLE TOM IN MODERN DRESS

"A Negro's Faith in American," by S/Sgt. Spencer Logan (Macmillan, $1.75) was awarded first prize in the Macmillan Centenary contest for non-fiction by service men. Unless there was an "untimely" paternalism or a vicious design in the minds of the judges, it is very difficult to understand the prize-winning worth of this book.

Forty-six years ago, MacMillan Company, published the infamous "American Negro," by Thomas, a South Carolina Negro. While Logan's book is without scholarly vitrol and amazingly derogatory references to the American Negro, one would not be guilty of faulty judgement to say that the younger author is among the limited stampings (thank God!) from the Thomas die.

In this year of 1946 this literary "Black Hope" has the sheer effrontery to record the following statements: "Many Negro soldiers will return home with an attitude toward white women which may require a period of re-education if serious consequences are not to result. Most of all, the Negro soldier himself, must face the situation realistically, and remember that the attitude of a liberated and hungry people is not to be confused with a more normal society to which he will return." Since when has it become necessary for any soldier, white or black, to be re-educated to return to a society with white women?

Sergeant Logan feels that the Negro's time-worn docility and faith in God are working techniques for survival. Moreover, he exhorts Negroes to stay clear of his city-bred brothers because they are a bunch of poverty stricken agitators who resort to picketing, court actions and rioting to achieve a semblance of civic and national dignity. The author's rantings and fox hole reflections on his race's position and course in America manifest his Elizabeth, N. J., background and outlook in more ways than one.

Under a very strong magnifying glass the reader may find a few sensible statements, but they are trite and add nothing to the book.

KENNETH L. BRIGHT,
New York, N. Y.

Group Differences Not Convincing

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

Psychologist Debates Issue in New Volume

Sat. 10-26-46

NEW YORK (ANP) — "Not proved" is "the only verdict that can be given to the contention, by some, that there are inherent differences in psychological characteristics between the colored and other races.

This is the conclusion of Dr. Herman G. Canady, head of the psychology department of West Virginia State College, in "The Encyclopedia of Psychology" just published and to which he has contributed the section on "The Psychology of the Negro."

Dr. Canady, who is also the current race relations lecturer for the American Friends Service Committee, takes scientific caution, however, to say that his conclusion is the verdict "at this time."

He adds: "We must keep our minds open, and be prepared sometime to have it proved that in some characteristics, at least, there are marked divergencies."

Dr. Canady, a teacher and researcher for 18 years, and holder of three degrees at Northwestern University, discusses the historical background of race prejudice, the "conflicting" points of view in regards to racial differences, and the strengths and weaknesses of intelligent testing.

Book Reviews

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

By J. Saunders Redding

QUALITY. By Cid Ricketts Sumner. Published by Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 286. p. $2.50.

"Quality," a novel by Cid Ricketts Sumner, was written to the specification of the Ladies' Home Journal.

At the level of the usual specifications for popular magazine writing, "Quality" should have been pointless tripe, meant to dull as an opiate dulls. But somehow it does not. Sat. 9-28-46

Somehow the author, a Southern white woman, now living in the North, saw fit to work on an intenser and more meaningful level than the average popular writer, and the result is the kind of book that may conceivably stimulate some readers.

Not Great Novel

This is not to say that "Quality" is a great novel—nor anything near great; but it is an interesting book. This story of the quadroon Pinky, old black Aunt Dicey's granddaughter, has many of the trappings and some of the concepts that tend to cheapen and to falsify the truth of colored life in America.

It is forced in many places; some of its situations are incredible; many of its characters are stereotypes; much of its language is strained and artificial; and most of its atmosphere is compounded of moonlight and roses.

And yet all of this adds up to an interesting book, even a good book for Southern whites to read because it was written by one of them.

Must Be Patient

There can be no carping about Mrs. Sumner being an outlander and a radical. She is neither.

Eventually she comes around to the point of view that colored people must be patient, enduring, and good, she "nothing conceals, nothing extenuates" in revealing the petty meanness, the ignorance and hatred of the majority of white Southerners.

The story begins with the conscience-stricken flight of the quadroon, Pinky Johnson, from Boston and her white fiance to Mississippi, her grandmother, and her "own" people. She was educated, she was "white" and she had passed for white for 12 years.

The Search Ends

After a few months of soul-searching, she would have returned to the life she had left, but her fiance came to find her first. The resulting scene is forced and false, but it carries the story forward.

From this point Pinky' life begins anew. She loses the shame she feels for her Granny and her people. She plunges (reluctantly, it is true) into the life around her. And finally she overcomes her hatred for old, aristocratic white Miss Em, for whom her Granny slaves, enough to nurse her in her final illness.

Same Old Dixie

It is subsequent to Miss Em's death that the real trouble begins. There is the court contest over Miss Em's will, a near-lynching, threats, and finally arson.

It is this part of the book, the final quarter of it, that catches up all the opposing forces, all the sulphurous malevolence, the hatred and prejudice, the ignorance and crime that make the South the bitter land of blood it is. It is also this part of the book that a reviewer's retelling cannot do justice to.

But I recommend "Quality" to you, less for what it does than for what it attempts. It does nothing too well, but it attempts what it does with honesty—and honesty is important. It is especially important in a book dealing with the materials with which this book deals.

Book Reviews

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

By J. Saunders Redding

A NEGRO'S FAITH IN AMERICA, by Spencer Logan 88 pages, Macmillan Co., Price $1.75.

Toward the end of the first autobiographical chapter of his book, "A Negro's Faith in America," Spencer Logan has this to say:

"I have given this brief statement of my background and experiences before entering the Army so that the reader may judge the point of view from which I write."

But the point of view is extremely dubious and equivocal, and as for the rest, one must conclude that there is nothing either in Mr. Logan's background or experience that qualifies him to write the kind of book "A Negro's Faith in America" turns out to be.

"Presumptuous, Condescending"

For the book is in no sense a personal testament, as the title implies. Instead, it attempts to speak for all colored Americans; and in so doing it is at least presumptuous. It is also condescending, captious, and pretentious, though I feel certain that the author intended it to be none of these things.

Mr. Logan, one feels, is a sober and sincere man. Now a man who is sincere can be forgiven much, but the kind of sincerity required in a book of the sort "A Negro's Faith in America" purports to be should stem not from individual frustration, but from an objective, coldly clinical knowledge. Sat. 8-24-46

This knowledge the author simply does not have. Somehow he has been led into inexcusable errors. He passes judgment on matters which he understands imperfectly.

Opinions Contrary to Fact

He utters opinions which are unsupported by fact, and, indeed, are sometimes quite contrary to fact; and he uses cliches which, whatever else they do, do not clarify meaning.

In a turgid resume of what colored people in America have tried to do to better their lot, Mr. Logan says:

"Certain Negro leaders possessing more zeal than realism have propounded impressive but impractical plans for their people. These plans failed . . . . ." (because) "the proponents of all the plans overlooked this (the impulse of a civilization to protect its own chances of survival) when they glibly announced their purpose . . ." (The leaders) "were intent upon setting up concepts and institutions which were alien and even unfriendly to this civilization.

"Dr. DuBois through the Pan-African Congress wanted unity of Negro thought. Dr. Miller would have set up a central clearing house for Negro opinion which would in time have become autocratic in its operation. . . ."

"Sheer Nonsense"

The central point in this statement (that W. E. B. DuBois and Kelly Miller were interested in setting up concepts alien and unfriendly to America) is sheer nonsense, as are such statements as these picked at random:

"It is generally recognized by Negroes that the lighter the color, the less stability of character and purpose.

"This senseless belligerancy (of Negro leaders) created the atmosphere for the recent rioting in New York City. . . . The rioting could not be explained directly in terms of hunger for food. It could be attributed, however, to the constant agitation carried on by Negro leaders for the letter of democracy."

Meaningless Statement

And what does this statement mean?: "America is a potential proving ground . . . of the theory that all men have within themselves a mental and spiritual unity."

But of course, if Spencer Logan had left out all the immature appraisals, all the carping, and all of the material that shows his woeful lack of historical and social fact, he would have had an essay of less than three thousand words — and an essay of less than three thousands words would not have made a book.

Bilbo, Rankin Won't Like This New Book

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa.

NEW YORK—(ANP) — Bilbo and Rankin won't like Dorothy W. Baruch's book, "Glass House of Prejudice," which recently rolled off the presses of William Morrow and Company. Sat.

Mrs. Baruch traces prejudice from is beginnings, treats the causes and offers some concrete "cures" which are in direct opposition to the mouthings of these Mississippi demagogues. 10-26-46

From Alabama to Harlem

The Courier - Louisville, Ky. Review by William Habich

JULE: By George Wylie Henderson. 234 pp. Creative Age. $2.50. Sun. 10-20-46

"Jule" is a straightforward story by a Negro writer about an intelligent Negro who wants to amount to something. It takes him from an idyllic boyhood of opossum hunts and hominy grits in backwoods Alabama to the cabaret and full maturity. In the South, Jule has a rather touching friendship with a white boy his own age, and later makes the mistake of falling in love with the wrong Negro girl for there is fear and frustration. The writing has a flashy sophistication of a Harlem death of his mother—the woman whose story was so well-told in this author's first novel, "Ollie Miss." As the book progresses, there arises occasional flashes of inner fire, but it is a white man interested in Jule escapes to Harlem, but also becomes heavy in its own simplicity. "Jule" is not for a pleasant evening's reading, yet I found it fascinating in spite of its many imperfections.

Alice Browning

The Defender
New 'Uncle Tom' Chicago, Ill.

ONE CAN easily see why **A Negro's Faith in America** was published. The average white American will like it. Sat. 6-22-46

This author has attempted a book with ambitious pretensions which, while it has good intentions, is the latest edition of **Uncle Tom.** Logan is writing in a vacuum, so to speak, with pat preconceived ideas of the Negro's plight, with no real fighting spirit and with many inconsistencies. Part of it is drivel; another section is commonplace, and some of it is good. But even the best is a rehash of the hash. There is nothing to shock or stir America as in the case of **Black Boy** by Richard Wright for example. The pendulum swings from intense pessimism to extreme optimism this time.

In his preface, Logan claims an objectivity, a realism and a Chanticleer attitude of "Wake up America." He is hardly all of that. The best we can say for him is that the MacMillan Centennial prize winner has the delightfully easy conversational style possessed by many new Negro writers, that the book flows naturally, is fast reading and fortunately is brief. His choice of words is good, not unusual or poetic, but simple, substantial English.

Contradictions Evident

HIS OBSEQUIOUSNESS and contradictions are particularly evident in the first half of the book. One moment he says Negroes need training; the next, he attacks as vicious government paternalism, the late NYA which even now is recognized as having been one of the greatest stimulants to the training of Negro youth, certainly of incalculable value. With one breath Logan says laws should be made in order to change discriminatory practices; with the next, he brands as impractical any attempt to change laws.

He reprimands the Negro press as agitators, yet he writes, on the other hand, that we should fight for a maintenance of the progress gained during the war. How on God's green earth can we fight for jobs or other rights without the militant attitudes taken by the "Non-Uncle Tomish" part of the Negro press? Surely no gains will be made by praying and planning alone as Logan seems to advocate. Rather, a "Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition" technique is needed.

Spencer Logan deplores political agitators when practically everyone agrees that politics is one of the Negro's best weapons. Logan also abhors miscegenation which should be a matter of individual decision. The more objective writers feel it erroneous to state that any two races could not be sexually attracted to each other, barring all taboos. Common interests intellectual and otherwise should be the determining factors here.

Unscientific Statements

LOGAN MAKES unscientific statements to the effect that the lighter the color of the Negro, the less stability of character and purpose with of course notable exceptions. He also says that Mr. Average Negro prefers a darker woman as his wife for the above reasons.

In fiction, one might record hearsay, but in making unfounded gossipy statements such as these, our young GI writer reveals a thinking as confused as that of the usual Caucasian, and certainly one in exact variance with that Christian spirit he lauds as a cure all. There is certainly no scientific proof that inferiority results from racial mixtures and to say so categorizes practically the entire colored American race as inferior.

In the latter part of the book, Logan is on sounder ground with fewer inconsistencies. Here he gives an idealistic plea for **Good Will Race Relation Clinics** which might help a little. Being a soldier, he is well informed about the needs of the returning GI and his pleas for a better sense of values and a true democracy are valid.

I feel that on the whole, **A Negro's Faith in America**, never quite gets to the point, is narrow, conciliatory and that this book is merely one more addition to those which feed the general smug apathy and blindness of Mr. Average citizen toward ramification implications of race in American life.

Book Reviews

The Afro-American
By J. Saunders Redding
Baltimore, Md.

("COME OUT FIGHTING," by Durant and Rice, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 224 p. $3.50; "GIVE HIM TO THE ANGELS," by James R. Fair, Smith and Durrell, 184 p. $2.50.)

Two books which, like works on apiculture and the art of tatting, are intended for a limited but avid public, were delivered to me this week. They were about pugilism. Sat. 9-14-46

Unless you are interested in the manly art of beak-bashing, you will not read either of these books. Indeed, you will probably not read this review.

One of these books is fascinating; the other disgusting. "Come Out Fighting," by John Durant and Edgar Rice, is a pictorial history of boxing from the earliest times down to Joe Louis.

Authors Love Boxing

This is the fascinating one. It it written with a due respect not only for fact but for setting forth fact in readable language.

The authors, who seem to love the fight game, are not blind to its faults, to the atmosphere of hoodlumism that so frequently surrounds it, and to the scroundalism that would have put it out of business in the late twenties (after the retirement of Tunney) and early thirties had not Joe Louis came along to retrieve it.

"The Dark Ages," the authors call this period, and dark indeed it was—"a time of mob-controlled ringman like Primo Carnero, fixed fights," "four fights," and four-flushers like Young Stribling.

Richly Illustrated

The text of "Come Out Fighting" is richly illustrated with the kind of action photographs any camera fan would give his Brownie to have taken. Some of these are rather gruesome.

There is that one of Jess Willard, his face one bloody welt, withering under the blows of Jack Dempsey. There is Tunney, obviously badly hurt, falling to the canvas in the famous "long-count" fight.

And there is the sickening, ghastly look of pain and terror on the faces of Carnera and Schmeling as they grow rubbery beneath the fists of Joe Louis.

Disgusting Squirt

The disgusting book is "Give Him to the Angels (the story of Harry Greb), by James R. Fair.

That the book is disgusting is not the fault of the author—though he didn't have to write it, did he? It's the fault of the subject.

Harry Greb was a digusting squirt. Dirty as a fighter, vain, lecherous, he broke every rule of the ring and every rule of conduct.

Killed by Vanity

His enormous vanity was almost unbelievable, and it was the core of his being. Instead of a heart, he had a mirror, and he saw himself reflected there as the fightenest, toughtest man that ever was.

To keep that image intact, he did such things to his opponents as kneeing them in the groin, thumbing them in the eye, butting them under the chin, stepping on their feet, biting their ears in clinches, and hitting below the belt. But Tiger Flowers finally cut him down.

Then, later, his vanity killed him: he died having his face lifted—and if he was given to the angels, then I don't want to go to heaven.

Xmas Story For Children Smears Race

Defender
Chicago, Ill.
Sat. 12-28-46

NEW YORK—Roy Wilkins, editor of the Crisis, official organ of the NAACP, lodged a protest with the Stephen Day press last week for the inclusion of an anti-Negro story, "Dukes' Christmas," on its book list for children.

Wilkins rapped the book as "nauseating . . . with all the trappings, psychology and situations of slavery days," and cited an outraged complaint from a customer of the Crisis book shop, who purchased the objectionable book.

Investigation by the NAACP revealed that the customer's complaint was justifiable. The story, by Ruth McEnery Smith, reaches thousands of American children "and is no story to be read to children, for it gives a picture of Negro life which is hardly accurate in 1946." Many words to which Negroes object are used casually, suggesting to children who read the story that these words are proper in referring to Negroes. The word "coon" is used; also the word "nigger"; also, "tar baby."

USO Carries On Its Fine Work

The Constitution
Atlanta, Ga.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME, the Story of the USO, by Julia M. H. Carson; Harper; 221 pp., $2.50. Sun. 11-24-46

The USO is still going strong, serving the religious, spiritual, welfare and educational needs of the new peacetime Army.

Mrs. Carson points out that her book is not the history of the USO, but the heart-warming highlights of the work this important organization carried on through professional and volunteer workers.

There is a laudatory foreword by Gen. Eisenhower and praise in a preface by Adm. Nimitz.

Mrs. Carson pays high tribute to the thousands of Camp Shows entertainers, who traveled the wide world over to bring pleasure and relief from boredom to the armed foces.

Nineteen illustrations of USO work add to the interest found in this book—S. F. L.

DEACON SHOULD BE MORALLY STRAIGHT SAYS AUTHOR OF NEW BOOK

The Iowa Bystander
Des Moines, Iowa

RALEIGH, N. C., (NNPA)—A deacon should be morally straight, husband of one wife and a man who rules his own house, the Rev. M. W. Williams, local author and minister says in his latest book, "The Deacon His Duties and the Church Doctrines," which has just been published. Des Moines, Iowa

The church in the community, however well the minister can preach, does good in proportion to the men on its Deacon Board, the Rev. Williams says, and members pay in proportion as the men who handle the church money are held in their esteem. Thurs 12-27-46

The Rev. Williams is executive secretary of the Wake County Sunday School Convention's Training Department, author of "The Deacon's Place in the Church," co-author of "Who's Who Among North Carolina Negro Baptists," and former corresponding secretary of the Baptist State Sunday School Convention of North Carolina.

Bookshelf

By GERTRUDE MARTIN

Defender
Dancer Now An Author

Miss Dunham is the first vis-
understanding of the people she
found there. Chicago, Ill.

The Maroons are the remnants of some 1,500 slaves who had escaped to the mountains during the Spanish rule in Jamaica and remained there when the English came. Members of warlike tribes from the African West Coast, the Maroons had never been made servile and they were later joined by numbers of rebellious British slaves.

Miss Dunham is the
itor to have stayed with the Ma-
roons in their mountain village
for over a day. Although reti-
cent at first they gradually
warmed to her and before she
left she had been initiated into
the secret obi rites.—a
concession indeed.

Wins Rosenwald Fellowship

Miss Dunham spent 30 days among the Maroons in the village of Accompong, Jamaica and this simply told account of her stay is a skillful blend of scientific knowledge and sympathetic understanding of the people and a great interest in primitive dances, especially war dance of requests to see the war dance then only by chance that she did EQUIPPED WITH a Rosenwald fellowship and a great interest in primitive dances, especially the Koromantee war dance of requests to see the war dance then only by chance that she did read, Miss Dunham was met with silence. It was happen upon the Koromantee first that all her not until the end of her visit, and war dance but then it proved to

be anticlimactic and not of as much interest as she had hoped.

Miss Dunham reports that life among the Maroons is simple and peaceful. Crime is practically non-existent, property is held by the community and allotted to the villagers for cultivation. Since more and more of the younger members of the tribe are leaving Accompong, there is always sufficient land. They take the products of their farming, bananas, breadfruit and vegetables, to the nearby village of Maggotty to sell.

The Maroons follow the double standard in sex behavior—at least after marriage. Sex relationships before marriage are expected and a prospective groom thinks nothing of his bride's illegitimate child or children as the case may be. After marriage, however, it is a different story and any dereliction on the woman's part is a very serious matter although the men often maintain a second family.

Miss Dunham writes simply and concisely. She has presented her material in the form of day by day notes of her experiences at Accompong. Although extremely short, "Journey to Accompong" makes the Maroons as close as next door neighbors.

Illustrations for "Journey to Accompong" were done by Proctor Fyffe Cook and they are excellent. The format of the book is unusually attractive in both type face and paper. On the whole it is the sort of book which makes an excellent gift—and with Christmas right around the corner that, too, is in its favor.

"Journey to Accompong" by Katherine Dunham; Henry Holt and Company; New York City; 1946; $2.50. 12.21-46

Book Reviews

The Afro-American

By J. Saunders Redding

AMBER GOLD: An adventure in Autobiography, by A. H. Maloney. Boston, Meador Publishing Company. 448 pp., $2.50.

It has been a long time since I have read so consistently interesting and, in places, provocative a work with the unlikely title of "Amber Gold."

Baltimore, Md.

There is nothing about the appearance of this book which gives the slightest clue to its contents. First of all, it is one of those vanity books. Its dust jacket is ugly and cheap, its paper is pulp, and its very name repels.

I picked it up with a feeling of boredom, which the prefatory matter did not lighten. That matter consisted in part of four essays on the author, and they read like the speeches in a meeting of some mutual admiration society.

Shows Poor Taste

Such an introduction to a book is at worst a lapse in taste and at best a poor attempt to give value to what may prove entirely valueless. Well-nigh stymied by the handicaps gratuitously imposed upon the book, I turned to Chapter One and read, "I was born at Cocoye Village."

From that point on I read with a kind of absorption, and with surprise, and with impatience, and with occasional flashes of pique. And since I've put the book down and walked around it, as it were, I've wondered about many things and about the source of my interest in "Amber Gold," but I still do not know.

It is one of those provoking books to which I shall probably be forced to return.

On the purely negative side, this can be said: The author is no writer in the professional sense of the term. The writing even for a novice.

Bad Writing

It is turgid, pedantic, even dogmatic. Dr. Maloney is capable of such passages as this: "It would have tempered my studious tendencies with a more varied fund of means to social diversions and enriched my scholarship through a keener appreciation of the lilting trivialities no less than the ponderous motivation of empirical existence." And he is capable of even more serious lapses of taste than that indicated by the preface.

Sat. 12-14-46

But these faults are forgiven him, for his story, so long as he sticks to it, is interesting. He takes us through his childhood in Trinidad, B.W.I., to his manhood in the States.

His sheer versatility (of which he somehow seems to boast) is astonishing, even if it does seem the least bit opportunistic.

First a preacher (in Annapolis, Md., and Indianapolis, Ind.), then a teacher of psychology (at Wilberforce), then a student of medicine, and finally, a professor of pharmacology (at Howard)—it is an amazing record of achievement which even more renowned men might envy.

Maloney Naive

When Dr. Maloney gets into social and political philosophy—which he does less than half way the book—the naivete of one so learned provokes the reader.

A great deal of what he says has no meaning for the searching mind, nor for those who have found a faith. What does have meaning for all of us is the fact that this book proves once again the extraordinary capacity of the ordinary human being for change, adjustment, and growth.

The WORLD and AFRICA

An Inquiry into the Part Which Africa Has Played in World History

By W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS

Can the freedom-loving modern world close its eyes and ears to the exploitation by foreigners of a continent three times the size of Europe and four times that of the United States, and to the centuries-old oppression of its widely scattered people?

This is the challenging question which Dr. DuBois asks in *The World and Africa.* To document his declarations concerning the insane injustices which have been meted out to Negroes by their white exploiters, he reports the whole history of the Continent—the vast contributions of ancient and modern Africa to world culture, industry, and peace, contributions which have been concealed by a conspiracy of silence among white historians. The ancient civilization of Egypt, according to Dr. DuBois, owes much of its strength to African genius; ancient India benefited from African thought; African products and African labor built much of European and American civilization; Africa contributed vitally to the winning of two world wars for the Allies; Western capitalism, and the beauties and refinements of Western culture, would have been impossible without Africa and her people.

It is not only for a new deal to Negroes that Dr. DuBois pleads, but also for a long-delayed recognition of the important part in the history of the world played by their motherland, Africa, and for its dignity in a future world order. His plea is backed by little-known facts which will undoubtedly come as news even to many historians. This is a forceful and a bitter book.

HISTORY • JANUARY • 288 PAGES • 5⅜ x 8 • $3.00

W. E. B. DU BOIS

has degrees, honors, and awards too numerous to mention. During the last fifty years he has written many books, the most recent of which was *Color and Democracy: Colonies and Peace,* published in 1945. He has spent much time in Russia, various European countries, England, China, Japan, Haiti, Jamaica, and Cuba. He is Director of Special Research for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

An Angel for Delilah

A Review by Joy Bale

SEND ME AN ANGEL: By Alice Nisbet. 122 pp. Chapel Hill. $2.

The Courier-Journal

As poignant as a half-remembered sorrow, as haunting as an elusive love is Alice Nisbet's gentle story about a Southern Negress who failed to find an answer to her life. Deserted by her husband, who had been one of many lovers in her gay youth, Delilah's only joy is her half-witted son, Sammy, born out of wedlock and yet representing for her the one truly good thing that ever happened. Sammy, in spite of his weak mentality, displays a quiet understanding which transcends intelligence and it is not difficult to understand Delilah's anxious and consuming adoration for him. That love is the one strong quality which she possesses.

The premonition and the actual reality of tragedy stalk Delilah as she drags out her dreary days in a Southern plantation cabin. Less sinned against than sinning, she becomes increasingly bitter and disintegrated. She resigns herself to certain facts of life which she considers the will of God because, through fear, she dares not consciously rebel against them. But she does not feel obliged to accept the offenses of the white race and her warped hatred eats at her like a cancer until she fails to recognize kindness in white people even when it comes to her.

Louisville, Ky.

Reminiscent of a Stephen Foster ballad, the book is neither an indictment of the white race nor a plea for colored race. It is the story of an individual in circumstances too big for her and it is with great sensitivity that Nisbet understands the dark need for an angel and with dramatic impact "de Lawd" does send Delilah an angel in the author goes deep into the heart of this bewildered woman whose color is only one of her tragedies. Taking her title from "John Brown's Body," Miss way that gives the book an altogether satisfying though sober ending.

9 1946

Negro Lawyers In The Nation

Star of Zion

A very interesting booklet, "Who's Who Among Negro Lawyer," has been published by the National Bar Association, having been edited and compiled by Mrs. Sadie T. Alexander, a very prominent lawyer of Philadelphia. Listed in the publication, with names and addresses, are 356 Negro lawyers, which indicates there is a broad field of opportunity in that profession for any number of young men and women, who wish to make the law their vocation.

It is interesting to note that many young people habitually pass up the study of law, especially in the South, for the reason that they have the impression Negro lawyers find great difficulty in establishing a paying practice in the South. It is often asserted prospective clients will not retain Negro lawyers, because of the fear that their action in so doing will prejudice their case. Undoubtedly there is much justification for this feeling, but it is known that many Negro lawyers do very successfully practice in the courts of the South. And more and more injustice and unfair attitudes of the courts in the South are being broken down. Thus.

These facts, even in spite of the discouragement, should encourage Negro young people to study law, for good lawyers can not only make money, but by establishing reputations of honesty and dependability they can win the confidence of their people who so frequently stand in need of competent legal advice. 2-28-46

A Brazilian Inventory

The Nation New York N.Y.

T. LYNN SMITH, in "Brazil: People and Institutions" (Louisiana State University Press, $6.50), provides the fullest sociological and economic survey of the South American republic yet published in convenient one-volume form. It exceeds in scope and statistical detail the Brazilian section of Preston E. James's "Latin America" (now reissued as a separate book), and while lacking the critical or speculative value of Morris L. Cook's "Brazil on the March," Vera Kelsey's "Seven Keys to Brazil," or Gilberto Freyre's more wishfully abstract "Brazil: an Interpretation," all of which were directed toward political and economic recommendations, it provides the fuller facts on which such recommendations must be based by whoever cares to render them seriously effective. Dr. Smith has written mainly a book of reference. Its chapters fall into divisions devoted to Cultural Diversity, The People, Levels and Standards of Living, Relations of the People to the Land, and Institutions. He presents his method as empirical. He spent a month in Brazil in 1939 and a year in 1942-43. His seventy pages of diary, as studiously impersonal as the severest methodology could desire, indicate the technical spirit of his research and findings. Sept. 3-4-46

That he was prepared for the realities of human and social maladjustment in his subject—and thus for problems of urgent national and international importance—is implied by his using as a prefatory index of "serious shortcomings in Brazilian society" the twenty-seven "unfavorable realities" defined by Teixeira de Freitas in the *Revista Nacional de Educaçao* in 1934. These range from "excessive dispersion of population," "moral regression," "the lack, sufficiently general, of urban hygiene," "extreme misery among a part of the agricultural proletariat," and illiteracy among the mass of rural and urban population, through such persistent handicaps as "great confusion in weights and measures," "deficient means of communication and transportation," and "lack of the most rudimentary knowledge of practical life among most social classes," to "the injurious development of gambling," "blind, wasteful . . . devastation of the forests," "frequent . . . outbreaks of banditry," "the worst sanitary conditions in some zones," and "the exercise with impunity, in all parts, of the pernicious quackery of fetish doctors and charlatans." This index offers a wide range of opportunity to legal, economic, and social reformers, and to their necessary if chronically discouraged instruments, the enlightened political minority. Neither twelve years of the Estado Novo of Vargas nor the influx of Good Neighbor money and techniques have materially reduced Teixeira's "realities" or the need of the most persistent attention to their potential dangers. Dr. Smith's scanty treatment of education may be justified on the score of existing facilities but not by existing needs, though here, admittedly, temperamental, psychological, and traditional factors with which his method is unprepared to cope would be involved in fruitful research. Sat. 5-4-46

His "conclusion" occupies only 7 of his 800 pages. Too brief to be anything but suggestive, it is valuable in what it says on "cultural lag," on needed changes in agrarian, immigration, and hygienic policies, and on necessary reforms in landholding, property tenure, social legislation, and trade and municipal systems. He is sound when he says that "Brazil would be wise to double, double again, and then redouble the number of students it is sending to study in foreign universities," though here one must correct his preference of "scientific training" to "training in the humanitics," the latter being nowhere so necessary as where the former combines the lure of novelty with the chance of reckless commercial exploitation. But in these few pages Dr. Smith adds to his monumental encyclopedia of facts a clue to some of the measures for "valorizing its people" whereby the physically largest among the American republics might bring its size into some favorable ratio to its nationalistic ambitions, its latent potentialities, and its importance to the economic and military strategy of the Western Hemisphere.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

INFLATION IS COMING, by Ralph Borsodi—
a practical post-war plan that tells what you can do to save your family from the worst financial disaster in history. Send $1.00 to Downtown Book Bazaar, 212 Broadway, New York City 7.

Ben Burns

Chicago Sept. Sun

Frank Yerby Makes His Bow

A NEW NEGRO novelist steps into the literary arena this week. With his first novel, he has grabbed the gold ring in the book world merry-go-round and immediately attained the top rung among present-day writers.

The newcomer is 29-year-old Frank Yerby, a former Chicagoan who once worked on the WPA writers project here. His initial novel, "The Foxes Of Harrow" (Dial Press, N.Y. $3) has already sold close to half a million copies before publication and Yerby is presently engaged in turning out two more. He has a six-year contract to write a novel a year for Dial Press. Chicago, Sat

Yerby has overnight leaped to fame by abandoning all past traditions which maintained an unwritten law that seemed to limit Negro authors to Negro themes. Yerby has forgotten the race theme to write a first-rate historical novel about a Dixie white family, "The Foxes Of Harrow"—and his Foxes are a sympathetic folk, a far cry from Lillian Hellman's "Little Foxes."

He has tackled the toughest kind of theme, writing most of his book after 12 hours a day working in a war plant, and turned out a remarkable panorama of the past that recreates all the flavor, romance, excitement and color of the early New Orleans Creole era.

Melodrama Galore Sat 2-2-46

FOLLOWING closely in the footsteps of confirmed peddlers of "corn," such as Kathleen Winsor and Margaret Mitchell, the youthful Negro novelist matches the swashbucking heroes, swooning romantic ladies and jasmine-scented countryside of the best old-timers in this money-making field. "The Foxes Of Harrow" is filled with usual quotas of Dixie cliches, with pulp-like personalities, with blood-and-thunder melodrama but is no more strained nor unbelievable than such plantation classics as "Gone With The Wind."

There's quite a difference though in treatment of the racial angle. Where the Peachtree Street tome vilified the Negro with stereotypes, Yerby has turned the tables. He has done a book fully as sweeping and lavish as Miss Mitchell's "Wind" but his Negroes are an admirable, sympathetic, human, heroic lot rather than the cringing, whining types portrayed by Miss Mitchell.

Yerby's tangled plot weaves through the early 19th Century and follows the always-amazing career of a one-time river boat gambler who becomes the plantation king of Louisiana. Nothing ever stops Stephen Fox—nothing until he tangles with the Union Army although he is anti-slavery. In the bayous around New Orleans, he builds a little paternalistic world where he reigns with an iron hand over his slaves, his wives and his mistresses.

The Golden Touch

NO SOONER is he thrown off a river craft because of his gambling triumphs than he hitches a ride into New Orleans on a pig boat and makes a life-long friend, Captain Mike Farrell. That's the way Stephen Fox operates — he makes a friend out of everyone. In New Orleans, it is

When he sees the luscious Odalie Arceneaux, the most coveted woman in all New Orleans, he finds her a lot harder. But the laws of matrimony and race supremacy finally bring him back to the fold, however, not until after he has made Desiree a mother.

The Fox clan thrives. There are ups and downs but always in the end Stephen Fox lands on top of the heap. Even when the Union Army bank crashes has plundered the countryside, a former Fox has built up the biggest fortune in the anticing Quadslave Inch becomes police chief of New Orleans

Off The Book Shelf

and marries his quadroon mistress, Desiree, Stephen Fox retains the same composure and dignity that carries him through all crises. He's a confirmed aristocrat throughout.

And so it goes through a lengthy but always engrossing tale that is a natural for a Hollywood movie—except of course for the Quadroon adventures. Yerby has demonstrated beyond a doubt that competent Negro authors can step into any field of literature. He has shown that the commodity of corn has no color line. He is carrying on the tradition of Alexandre Dumas, another Negro author of another day.

If you're one of those book fans who loves the hairbreath school of fiction, you'll be an enthusiastic customer for "The Foxes of Harrow."

J. A. Rogers, in two new volumes on the "World's Great Men of Color, 3000 B.C. to 1946 A.D. includes among his colored people:

Aesop who wrote the Fables; Hannibal of Carthage, great military leader who almost defeated Rome; the Queen of Sheba who came to Solomon; Cleopatra, the world's most beautiful woman; Beethoven and Haydn, the musicians; Robert Browning the English poet, and hundreds of others.

Discuss New Book Detailing History of 761st

These officers of the 761st Tank Battalion, presently doing occupation duty in Teisendorf, Germany, take time out to discuss the book, "Come Out Fighting" by Trezzavant Anderson, a former member of the unit, now an AFRO employee. Left to right are Capt. Ivan H. Harrison, Detroit; Lt. James C. Lightfoot, Washington; Lt. Col. Frank K. Britton, Hartford, Conn., commanding officer, and Lt. Charles H. Barbour. Junction City, Kans.

A Worthy Brotherhood

THE BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS. By Dr. Brailsford R. Brazeal. 258 pp. New York: Harper & Brothers. $3.

By GEORGE STREATOR

DR. BRAZEAL, Professor of Economics at Morehouse College, Atlanta, Ga., has traced the history of the Pullman porter from the creation of the sleeping-car industry by George Pullman down to the present day, when the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters is an accredited union in the American Federation of Labor and a factor for the well-being of the Negro worker.

Barred at the outset from affiliation with other railroad unions by the "Big Four" brotherhoods, which adopted by-laws and constitutions restricting membership to white workers, and "except for coverage during World War I," the porters "did not receive the definite benefits from railway labor law until the Railway Labor Act of 1926 was amended in 1934." Finally, in 1937, twelve years after the present union was organized, a contract was signed giving to the brotherhood jurisdiction over porters, maids and attendants in Pullman service throughout the United States and Canada. Although the Negro community was divided on the question—from church, fraternal and social organizations to the Chicago Urban League which was "said to be hostile because it depended upon the Pullman Company for contributions" — eventually the porters were supported widely. The Negro press, especially The Chicago Whip and Chicago Defender, surrendered to "gold and power," the author states. On the other hand, "outstanding dailies such as THE NEW YORK TIMES" and many others "have given news coverage to the activities of the brotherhood."

THE personality of A. Philip Randolph has been the largest single human factor in the success of the porters' drive for organization. The Negro labor leader, who was born in Florida, the son of a Protestant minister, speaks with broad "a's" and has platform gestures as foreign to the historic mannerisms of a menial servant as chestnuts from cheese. But this is precisely his power. Speaking with precision, and with an accent close to the classic Harvardese, he has succeeded in imbuing the Pullman porter with a measure of dignity and self-reliance.

The organization started in 1925 with Mr. Randolph being hired by W. H. Des Verney, Ashley Totten and Roy Lancaster as a full-time organizer. Beginning with a few employes living at the big railroad terminals, the organization has spread out as the most influential body of organized Negro labor in the country, recently organized Congress of Industrial Organizations unions not excepted. The union remains free from stories of extortion and chicanery and, in consideration of its handicaps, merits the laurels now being awarded it.

Black and White Dance in Buff As Drums Beat

VOODO IN NEW ORLEANS. By Robert Tallant. Macmillan. $2.50.

That citizens of New Orleans, white and socially prominent as well as black, once danced naked to the beat of voodoo drums in hidden places along the shores of Lake Pontchartrain on St. John's Eve may shock and disturb, but Robert Tallant has presented facts which should teach Americans much about the derivation of their jazz and jive, and the background of many of their religious practices. It may even throw some light on why bobby-soxers swoon for Frankie Sinatra. It should certainly change the ordinary conceptions of what voodoo is. While the rites and customs of voodooism began with Negro slaves of New Orleans who were imported from the West Indies some two hundred odd years ago, there is now scarcely one of us who has not been touched or influenced in some way by these same rites and customs. Of this, the author says:

"During the early decades of the present century . . . many fortune-tellers, palmists, healers and spiritualists added to their repertoires the dark magic that had been African . . . Voodoo began to be popular with all types of soothsayers and magicians."

Marie Laveau was the greatest of all voodoo queens, under whose long reign the cult of voodoo reached the climax of its power in New Orleans, who planted in its ritual the seeds of Christianity and commercialism which corrupted its once untainted savagery to the pale pink brew it has become today.

"Marie never lessened in any way the mysticism and sensuality of the fantastic Zombi worshipers—all the orthodox trappings of

FRANK SINATRA
Does Voodooism Explain Him?

the spectacle were retained: the snake, the black cat, the roosters, the blood-drinking and the finale of fornication — but she added some new tricks, both borrowed and original, principally Roman Catholic statues of saints, prayers, incense and holy water. The Voodoos had been devil-worshipers originally. Marie renounced this and always insisted that her people were Christians."

Today a non-devotee is perhaps relieved, perhaps disappointed to find that a rosary and picture of St. Peter have supplanted the once indispensable sacred snake; and that he will eat gingersnaps instead of the still twitching flesh of a rooster or a black cat, and drink raspberry pop instead of blood.

Henry Allen, a Negro waiter, is one whom Mr. Tallant queried in his research on voodoo. Allen says: "My grandpa used to say 'America is just like a turkey. It's got white meat and it's got dark meat. They is different, but they is both important to the turkey.' I figure the turkey has more white meat than dark meat, but that doesn't make any difference. Both have nerves running through 'em. I guess voodoo is a sort of nerve that runs mostly in the dark meat, but sometimes gets into the white meat, too."

M. K. O'D.

Maybury

THE INVISIBLE SUN. By Mildred Lee. 307 pp. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. $2.50.

PREACHER'S lot is not a happy one, as anyone knows who has looked into the subject in current fiction. The pay is nothing to write home about, the pastorium is invariably run-down, and predatory deacons are a constant menace. One misstep is likely to place an unwary pastor in the ranks of displaced persons.

Ed Peterial fiction and thrown in a who hated few authentic glimpses of life in whom Road. But in the main, she has nptly spot-concentrated on creating a most ty." In set-appealing small-town preacher, the psychi-albeit one hedged in by all the cliches of the genre. Readers who Gregory talks down a sullen Negroes; and Maimy Jackson, across the tracks from Tobacco and manhunt. Of course, brother Gregory arrived to take over the the town trollop, in Baptists were indifferent or Brother Gregory promptly worse in the shabby, sun-blistered little town, and a neurosis lurked behind every magnolia. There ting John Paul into the paths that alone could reach these "sick souls," Mayor Dess Ashburton, who found his solace and lost his weekends with a jug of corn; Mrs. Vincent Ashburton, haughty but from the main highways of Miss Lee's — right

RICHARD MATCH.

—AP Photos

VERSATILE VAN VECHTEN'S WORK—A self-portrait by camera of Carl Van Vechten, who in the last 40 years has been a critic, writer and photographer, is shown at left. Primarily interested in Negro subjects, Van Vechten takes unretouched pictures of celebrities such as Cab Calloway (left).

Van Vechten Scaled Heights In 3 Fields

Writer and Critic Blazed Racial Trails

NEW YORK, Jan. 12—(AP)—As a man on the literary heights of fiction and criticism, Carl Van Vechten probably has been more read about than read.

He is a character in Sinclair Lewis' "Gideon Planish"; Maxwell Bodenheim modeled Paul Vanderin after him in "Ninth Avenue"; he denies it, but other people who should know say that Thomas Wolfe definitely had Van Vechten in mind when he created Stephen Hook in "You Can't Go Home Again"; the works of Gertrude Stein, Somerset Maugham, Muriel Draper, and Gertrude Atherton are filled with allusions to and anecdotes about him.

In the last 40 years Van Vechten has been variously a music critic who was first to write about George Gershwin and Igor Stravinsky; a novelist whose prime interest was in Negro subjects; and finally, in his last metamorphosis, a photographer who takes unretouched pictures of touchy theatrical celebrities.

If he hadn't been any of these things he undoubtedly still would be a "character" as one literary Who's Who describes him. When he changed himself in middle life from a critic into a novelist, he said it was because "a critic's intellectual arteries have hardened after 40 years of age."

Didn't Like Writing

And when, 10 years and 10 books later, he quit the writing business cold he explained simply that he didn't like to write (in spite of the success of "The Blind Bow-Boy," "Nigger Heaven," "Peter Wiffle," and "The Tattooed Countess"), that he had chosen photography as his new "means of documentation of life."

The last change gives a clue to Van Vechten's make-up. At 65 he is opinionated, financially free (through an inheritance and his books), and fond of independence. Photography appeals to him "because there is no editor to interfere." Also his subjects are in no position to argue, since they pose by invitation only and as he says: "I do not allow them to pay anything because then they would have control."

Under this system, Van Vechten has taken about 15,000 pictures. As a photographer he has been compared to Matisse, the painter. "Probably," says he, "because my backgrounds also relate to the subject.' People who don't like his work say that the backgrounds overwhelm the subject; people who do like it, are very flattering. Eugene O'Neill, whom he has photographed at least 150 times, once wrote: "Carl . . . the world's finest photographer."

Cleans Up Apartment

New York apartments being what they are, Van Vechten for the last few years has been systematically stripping himself of his pictures, manuscripts books, newspaper clippings, phonograph recordings, papers, pamphlets and letters.

Theatrical photographs now are divided between the Museum of the City of New York and the New York Public Library; the musical memorabilia that managed to cling to him from his early essay days he amassed into "The George Girshwin Memorial Collection of Music and Musical Literature," which he founded at Fisk, a Negro university in Nashville, Tenn.

Van Vechten's purpose in giving what is one of the best musical libraries in the South to a Negro college was part of a scheme he had for luring white scholars into a Negro school. He previously had done just the reverse of that by installing the biggest collection of modern Negro material in the United States at Yale University. This he called the "James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of Negro Arts and Letters."

Blazed Trail

From the time he met Clarita Day, a nightclub singer in Chicago, when he was a student at the University of Chicago, Van Vachten had more than most white men's interest in the Negro. His second encounter was with Walter White's "Fire and the Flint" in 1924 and he says: "I think then within three months I knew every prominent Negro in New York."

He is satisfied that he has changed the point of view of countless whites by introducing them to "not only intelligent, but brilliant Negroes." In his books and in his drawing room his concern is not with the old debate of "the massa" and his servants but with the aesthetic side of Harlem, the black capital of the world.

Ethel Waters and Paul Robeson give him credit for a great deal of their success; several Northern colleges, including Harvard, followed suit with a Negro collection after he broke the trail. This big, white-haired, mild-mannered, man of letters did—and is doing—what he wanted to do.

"It is controversial and compelling . . . a work of meaning, delicacy and emotional power."

—*N. Y. Herald Tribune*

new York Times

DEEP ARE THE ROOTS

New York N.Y.

A Play in Three Acts by

ARNAUD D'USSEAU and JAMES GOW

With a Preface by the Authors

1-17-46

The complete text of the successful and widely discussed play now running in New York. "It has the distinction of showing America to itself. . . . You recognize it as a kind of seismograph registering with amazing precision the various degrees to which our society is facing or not facing the 'Negro problem'." *New York Post.*

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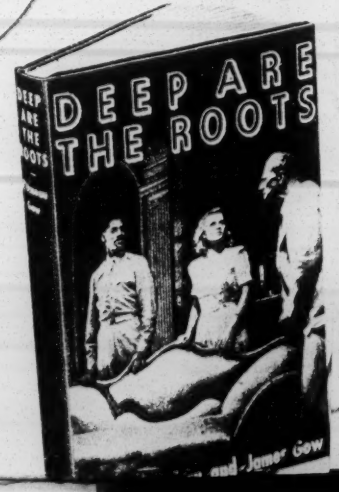

Creole Get-Together

The New York Times

"GUMBO YA-YA" is a dish made of left-overs, pretends to be no more, and like many left-over dishes has the

By EUDORA WELTY

GUMBO YA-YA. A collection of luck to be seasoned highly enough Louisiana Folk Tales. Compiled by th get by. Evidently, the WPA Lyle Saxon, Edward Dreyer and Rob- Writers' Project of Louisiana, ert Tallent. Material Gathered by after finishing the admirable Workers of the W P A Louisiana Louisiana Guide had many an Writers' Project. Illustrated. 581 pp. unused bit it would be a shame Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $5. to throw away—stories, legends, gossip, interviews, write-ups special stuff. 1-20-46

So why not? Here's a book called "Gumbo Ya-Ya." The expression refers typically to a Catholic saints' days are cele-

gathering of Creole ladies for an afternoon and means "Everybody talks at once." The subtitle, "A Collection of Louisiana Folk Tales," is not trouble-some at all, curate, the book being a casual collection of almost everything else WPA writers gather.

The Creoles and Cajuns, the voodoo priestesses, the slaves, racetrack boys, the madames, the hoodlums and sports, the pirates and ghosts, the saints—are. The way the book peters out like some wonderful evenings of conversation about some delightfully curious subject—so much rushes to be said that it ends talked out, with babbles, sighs and yawns.

"GUMBO YA-YA" is fresh, colloquial and easy-going in approach—is no "study" at all. Now and then a kind of master-of-ceremonies attitude toward the things they are telling dulls what some of the narrators say—so that the curious, even the ungodly, turns self-conscious or facetious.

There is an abundance of original material, in Louisiana, and it was a good idea to gather it, but there is a feeling that if one man had really pondered on the whole and then written a book which did more than stir everything up together and dish it out, there would have been more value to the work. But then it woudn't be "Gumbo Ya-Ya," and it is beside the point to wish of any book that it had been another. At any rate, the material here is uneven in its powers of fascination. The reader finds himself wondering if the editors discriminated often enough between what was indigenous to Louisiana and what was simply interesting in human nature and its vagaries. Much of the ghost-story section, for example, could find its obvious parallel everywhere in the world, the stale old Headless Horseman has been much farther afield than the Bayou Country. Many of the ghost-seers, cult leaders, etc., presented with the master-of-ceremonies style mentioned above, still appear what they would be anywhere, rather pathetic neurotics of well-known types, adding glamour to nobody's geography.

The book is like an old desk belonging to no-telling-who, so outlandish, occasionally, are the stuffings of the pigeonholes; the accumulation is curious and interesting, but only some of it worth keeping. Still, there is a romantic, or a hilarious, or a wild note here and there that justifies your looking through the book. And there is one idea the book gives, perhaps beside its purpose—that Louisiana, different from everywhere else in many ways, is still part of the rest of the world, the same old ghosts are stalking it, human beings when investigated come up with curious but not wholly unprecedented answers.

AFRICAN EAGLE CHANGED TO MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NEW YORK. — The African Academy of Arts and Research, publishers of "The African Eagle," announces that as of the first of February, 1946, it will become a four-page monthly newsletter for subscribers only.

"Hands of the Dead Reach Out for the Living" in this New Orleans cemetery-vault sketch from "Gumbo Ya-Ya" which is reviewed at the left.

A Wealth Of Creole Folklore

A Review by Adele Brandeis

GUMBO YA-YA: By Lyle Saxon, Robert Tallant and Edward Dreyer. 581 pp. Houghton Mifflin Co. $5.

For years the three editors of the Federal Writers' Project dug in the richly fertile fields of Louisiana for material for "New Orleans City Guide" and "Louisiana State Guide." There was far more than could be included in these books, and here we have the best, the most unusual, of what they unearthed and gathered into a fascinating medley, "Gumbo Ya-Ya." This means that everybody talks at once—it is a name given to gatherings of ladies of old Creole families, a descriptive title for this treasure house of lore about the city and the bayou country.

It is almost as though we had stepped unseen into one of these groups where gossip, history and reminiscense of earlier days filled the beautiful dusky shabby rooms scented with the aroma of freshly dripped coffee and the famous fried callas, rice cakes. Not all the subjects treated in this book would have been fit topics for conversation. These ladies may have heard of, but I doubt whether they discussed, the Temple of Innocent Blood, established originally by black, illiterate Mother Catherine as a hospital for unmarried pregnant girls, where hundreds of votive statues peered through the lights of 500 ever-burning oil lamps; or the Irish Channel with its fearsome gangs; or the Zulu King and his Baby Dolls of the Negro Mardi Gras parade. And they may not have talked of the altars built for St. Joseph, with 500 kinds of esoteric food displayed, to which guests were invited by means of newspaper advertisements, and came in hordes dropping their coins at the base of the altar. But I am sure there was much talk of the luxurious life on the beautiful old plantations at their height a century ago; of the lotteries with their "nickel gig," their prizes up to $600,000, of which the Negroes said, "They's good because I gets what I wants without having to steal, so it ain't no sin."

Perhaps they whispered under their breath about the famous quadroon balls, where all the young blades went to dance with the beautiful girls so lightly touched with color; and fearfully mentioned the reign of terror of the Jazz axman and his bloody murders.

Nowhere else but in this fairy-story land would you rent a vault, have an impressive funeral, and then return the vault empty after three days; nowhere else would the O'Brien become Obriong, and the German Zweig literally La Branche, when the family had become thoroughly New Orleanized. Nowhere else were there ever such gamblers as on the palatial Mississippi River steamboats, and nowhere else did the Negro roustabouts have such superstitions.

Here is collected a treasure of history, legend and folklore about the most romantic part of our country, and it is illustrated with superlative photographs and clever line-drawings. This is not quite the flesh and bones and blood of the city that can be found in the editor's other volumes—this is its aura.

"Swing Book Of 1946" Is Expected Off Press March 1

NEW YORK CITY — (CNS) — Word from the editor of Swing Book of 1946, Alice C. Browning, tells us that she has gone to press and expects the book to be out March 1.

Backed by the famous Lionel Hampton, Swing Book has hit many stages in debuting. Recently, as Hamp played the Strand Theatre here, Mrs. Browning came from Chicago to spend much time collaborating with him on articles and pictures before the final layouts were completed. They have to make this initial issue the first of the Hamp Swing Books., the next to appear January, 1947.

Up From the South

NEGRO LABOR. By Robert C. Weaver. 329 pp. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. $3.

By GEORGE STREATOR

THE exodus of the Negro worker from the ruins of the cotton kingdom and his search for employment in the industrial areas of the North, Middle West and Far West were accelerated by wartime labor shortages. In the wake of the exodus, farms, plantations and the traditional service jobs were left behind for war wages in shipyards, automobile and munitions centers. Within the South itself there has been a shift from rural towns to cities busy in war production.

During his ten-year career as adviser on Negro affairs to the Federal Government, Dr. Robert C. Weaver is thought to have leaned heavily on labor reform by fiat and Presidential order. His book "Negro Labor" draws on his experiences and reflects wisdom gained in the formative years of the New Deal. While he tends to attribute present-day racial friction to the "insistent drive on the part of colored Americans to achieve greater equality of opportunity," on the whole his mature reflections on racial attitudes stress the importance of training and sound leadership in attaining that goal.

Dr. Weaver predicts the rise of class-consciousness among Negroes in the South, leading to the wiping out of the "mistress and servant relationship," for three centuries the sole bridge between Negroes and the Southern ruling class. While he feels that the "intrenched nature of the color line" in some American Federation of Labor unions and the "Big Four" railroad brotherhoods will deny for a long time full membership to Negroes, he recalls with hope the courage and tact of the machinists' local in Cleveland, Ohio, which defied their International and admitted Negroes to full membership during the war.

DR. WEAVER is critical of "certain elements" working among Negroes who have encouraged an "uncritical attitude" toward all Congress of Industrial Organizations unions, something which "occasioned a policy of non-discrimination." However, he recognizes the elimination of constitutional barriers against Negroes as a major achievement in its record of paying lip service to additional value in setting up CIO unions. Although there is considerable light on Federal bungling in the acceptance by Federal agencies of an 9346, issued against bias in 1941 setting up of the Fair Employ- ment Practice Committee, and repetition of materials and arguments, and some unconvincing predictions of economic trends, unclear policy. The book has and 1943 respectively. Dr. Weaver's book sheds the unhappy consequences of

9 1946

Books of the Times

The Times New York, N.Y. Wed. 9-18-46

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

ONE swallow doesn't make a summer and two novels by young men who fought in the late war don't necessarily make a trend, thank goodness. Still, "The Devil Is a Lonely Man"* by Morrison Wood and "End Over End"† by Nelson Gidding are sufficiently disturbing. If this is the kind of fiction we are to expect from our newest lost generation the prospect is depressing indeed. Both of these frenzied books are the work of self-consciously emancipated, tediously tough and definitely gifted writers. Both of them are crudely vulgar beyond any reasonable requirements. Both authors suffered in the war and one of them died in it.

Morrison Wood was graduated from Ohio State University in 1938, enlisted in the Army in 1940, fought on Bataan and Corregidor, was captured and died in a Japanese prison camp in 1942. Before the fall of Corregidor the enormous manuscript of "The Devil Is a Lonely Man," some 400,000 words, was sent out by mistake in a soldier's footlocker on one of the last ships to leave the island. In the process of editing Mr. Wood's publishers have cut 150,000 words from the completed book. I believe that they could easily have cut as much more without damage and perhaps with improvement to the novel as it now stands.

A Deplorable Example of Excesses

Since Mr. Wood died under such heroic and tragic circumstances it may seem invidious not to greet this book with at least polite applause. But to do so would be a sad disservice to potential readers and even to the art, craft or mere trade of fiction. For this book is a deplorable example of several of the worst excesses which so frequently blight current novels: a wretched use of luxuriant verbiage, a complete lack of any discipline and control which can impose some form or order upon a mass of confused material, and an unhealthy obsession with sex. To these all-too-familiar failings Mr. Wood added several others more peculiarly his own: melodramatic blood and thunder so preposterous it is often ridiculous, a complete disinterest in characterization and a furious solemnity which blacked out any signs of a sense of humor.

These are fundamental faults, enough to sink any book. They do sink "The Devil Is a Lonely Man." Yet in spite of them there is evidence in these chaotic pages that Mr. Wood was blessed with real talent, that with greater maturity, judgment and experience he might have gone far. Some of his most extravagant scenes are genuinely dramatic as well as melodramatic; some of his most painfully pretentious prose is followed by vivid and effective passages. It was probably time Mr. Wood needed most, time which was so cruelly denied him. In a few years he might have acquired the taste and sense of proportion and restraint that are so conspicuously absent in "The Devil Is a Lonely Man."

This is the story of Anthony Wayne, who shortly after the Civil War hunted Negro girls with hounds in Alabama, who ruined scores of women, whose murders were casual trifles, who stole money in million-dollar lots, who delighted in diabolical cruelty, who became Senator from California and finally the master mind of a fascist revolution in California. It is also the story of Anthony's victims, his sons and of a cross-section of a Los Angeles high school where degeneracy and vicious brutality are the general practice.

Cheap Sensationalism One Fault

Mr. Wood evidently intended to write a serious parable about lust for power and the abuse of power and perhaps about the moral crisis of our times. But the complicated maze in which his many characters wander, his cheap sensationalism and his constant eroticism rob "The Devil Is a Lonely Man" of any such significance. Instead, it only seems like a youthful daydream of power and violence, seduction and rape, adventure and delightful wickedness.

Mr. Giddi... also a prisoner of war, of the Germans. I... y microscopic hand he wrote "End Over E... scraps of paper which he had to keep conce... When the Russians swept over eastern Germany Mr. Gidding escaped without his manuscript. But a fellow-prisoner rescued it and sent it to this country.

Jack Conroy Off The Book Shelf

Defender

Unusual Locale

CURTIS Lucas' first novel, "Third Ward Newark" (Ziff Davis, $2.50), is set in a rather unusual locale for books of its sort—the Negro district of Newark, N. J. Such stories ordinarily deal with Harlem or Chicago's South Side, but the characters and situations are recognizable as being common to Negro "ghettos" in all Northern cities, and, in some respects, Southern cities as well. Chicago, Ill.

Wonnie Brown, a child of misfortune from the start, is born on the Hill, Newark's section reserved for colored folks. "It is a slum area, and blighted. There people hang out on street corners; there women and children stand in the doorways of tumbling, roach-infested houses; and there pimps stand in front of the taverns that line the streets, talking shop. The characters on the Hill are as varied as they come: strong men, weaklings, frustrated wrecks, religious-minded folks, and vicious fellows. Beautiful young girls, and old hags; fortunate, well-kept women, and debased hustlers." Sat. 12-7-46

Lucas' range of characters is not quite as wide as the foregoing would indicate, but there is a considerable variety. Aunt Sarah, with whom Wonnie and her older cousin, Hattie, live as the story opens, is one of the heroic drudges found among poor women of all races the world over. She uncomplainingly toils as a domestic for a white woman in Orange, trying to feed and clothe the girls and give them an education. When the faithful old woman takes sick and dies, Hattie, at 17, takes over, but she soon learns that an attractive, well-formed girl like herself can make more money in another way. Then they catch her in a house on South st., with a white man, and she winds up in the Home for Wayward Girls. Wonnie, under the care of a kindly woman who keeps children for the state, runs away with Mildred, another ward of the state.

Murder and Revenge

Mildred is an expert at leading men on—keeping them at arm's length. All goes well until two white men, cruising about the district looking for handsome colored girls, force Wonnie and Mildred into their car. The upshot is that Mildred is murdered, and hysterical Wonnie manages to escape. Otis Evans, a Negro lawyer and politician, interests himself in her case and raises a fund for her education. Wonnie can think of nothing but revenge, and eventually she recognizes one of the two white men of that fatal night. He's Ernie Mihie, proprietor of the Gin Mill, a low resort in the Hill area. Even reunion with Hattie, who has also been befriended by Otis Evans, cannot sway Wonnie from her purpose of bringing Ernie to book. She becomes his nemesis, hangs around the Gin Mill to accuse him, though she has no definite evidence against him. Ernie's nerves are beginning to break when Wonnie meets Joe, a nice young fellow who works in a shipyard and who is intent on owning a grocery store where his people will be treated right. Marriage to Joe and her resultant happiness keeps Wonnie away from her obsession about Ernie for a time, but eventually she returns to it with tragic consequences.

"Third Ward Newark" is not an extremely ambitious novel, but within its somewhat limited scope it is an impressive and entertaining one. Lucas has a simple, sinewy narrative style well suited to his material, and his melodramatic climax is made credible and touching.

George Wylie Henderson's "Ollie Miss" excited the plaudits of the critics for its tender portrayal of the mother of the protagonist of "Jule" (Creative Age, $2.50). In the early portions of the present book, Jule is an Alabama farm boy. Ollie Miss tells him, "You got to be somebody, son. You got to be somebody as long as you live." His determination to be "somebody" is inadvertantly assisted when he has to flee to Harlem to escape the wrath of a white man. Here he falls into the company of the more gaudy elements of sporting life, women pant for him. This is a description of an episode occurring during a typical social affair:

"The doctor grabbed her wrist. His palm smacked against her cheek and he flung her across the room. She crashed into a table. 'You bastard! You lousy, stinking bastard!' She lunged toward him, clawing. Her nails raked his face. Flesh curled beneath her fingernails and she sank them deeper. Blood oozed from his face, like chopped-up beef. He pinned her arms behind her, and she sank her teeth into his lip. Blood gushed. He hit her with his fist and she sank to the floor."

Charming Fracas

A physician and an attorney figure prominently in this charming fracas. Lou, Jule's college-trained inamorata, is a vulgar two-timer; hardly any Harlem character other than Jule himself is worth bringing in out of the rain.

While Jule is in Alabama, the author's staccato, repetitious style is appropriate enough, though a bit tedious at times. There is something earthy and genuine that is lost or subdued when Harlem and its oft-delineated night clubs, two-timers, and other none-too-laudable phenomena are under consideration.

Book Reviews

The Afro-American
by J. Saunders Redding
Baltimore, Md.

HOW GOD FIX JONAH, by Lorenz Graham, with woodcuts by Calapai. N.Y. Reynal and Hitchcock, 171pp. $2.50. Sat. 12-21-46

Lorenz Graham's "How God Fix Jonah" is a book of narratives rendered in the African folk idiom. The narratives are based on the Old Testament and retell such stories as Samson and Delilah, the Prodigal Son, Job, Joshua, Ruth, and Solomon.

The Old Testament is itself folk stuff, and it has always seemed to me an exercise in the superfluous to render it again in any idiom whatsoever.

Those 48 scholars who, under the patronage of King James, gave us our English version of the Bible did too good a job. Its simplicity, its cadences, its narrative skill, its concreteness of expression, its spiritual passion can scarcely be improved upon. Its language can scarcely be made more alive.

It seems to me that the very best that can be done in a retelling of the Old Testament stories is to render them dramatically. But in this, too, something is lost, for the dramatic actor must struggle against the great odds of playing God.

It is not so much the sense of irreverence as it is the sense of inadequacy which makes such performances mere burlesque, however seriously intentioned.

After all, "Green Pastures" was amusing at least partly because it is impossible to simplify the Old Testament concept of God and still keep God.

And even in the Middle Ages, when men were more reverent and when religion was a consuming passion, the great cycles of Old Testament Biblical dramas soon deteriorated into comedy.

And yet what Mr. Graham has done in retelling the Old Testament narratives has much to recommend it, for his concern seems to be less with recreation than with positive creation.

That is to sav that the ancient concept of God and the giant-like Biblical characters is here transposed into a new concept, and the stories seem remarkably freshtoned and striking.

This is partly because there is no pretense about them, no effort; but it is also partly because the author sustains the illusion of uttering the narratives through the lips of an African boy.

As Dr. W. E. B. DuBois implies in a short foreword, we know very little about Africa—and so we accept much. The only quarrel I would like to make is that we in America are inclined to accept over-simplifications of the African mind and African thought-mind and thought which are probably more complex than our own. This over-simplification has come one of the stereotypes associated with the western world's erroneous concept of the "sav age."

But in spite of definite reser- vations, I like "How God Fix Jonah." I like its new and graphic imagery; its modest poetic-like expression. Though it is scarcely to be expected that Ruth's "sav "Ay-bah, Mommy! Don't beg me to left you I want go. The place where you stay I want stay. You people I want em for my people. You God I want have Him for my God." Cause the place where you go, "There is still something

in it, something that touches and moves one.

I like also the woodcuts by Letterio Calapai, which seem to me superb, fluid, representationally true.

Dustin' off the NEWS

By LUCIUS O. HARPER

THIS BOOK MADE ME FEEL PROUD OF MY BACKGROUND

SPEAKING to a mixed group on the South Side of Chicago recently Howard Fast, author of "Freedom Road," stated that there had been a concerted effort on the part of certain forces to rob the Negro of his rich historical background. "If you can make a man believe that he came from practically nothing that he has no background to be proud of and keep the history of his race hidden from him, you have him whipped at the start. This is how Hitler began his campaign against the Jews in Germany, and this is how most of America has conducted its campaign of inferiority against the Negro. It has been busily engaged in keeping the rich historical legends of the Negro race suppressed. This fight is still going on to keep the Negro in a subhuman status by making him believe that he has contributed nothing of actual value to civilization. The Negro, however, will have to get busy, and mighty busy, to stifle and choke off this vicious campaign."

Lucius Harper

Listening to Mr. Fast on this occasion, his words came back to me just recently when I spent some hours reading the contributions of some noted black men to world civilization and progress.

The achievements of Negroes and their contributions to world civilization from the days of Ancient Egypt down to our times are told in a new book by J. A. Rogers, author of "From Superman to Man," "Sex and Race," and other books. This new work is entitled: "World's Great Men of Color, 3000 B. C. to 1946 A. D." I was fully compensated for the time spent in journeying through its interesting and informative pages.

* * *

INCLUDED in this book are 200 short biographies of individual Negroes of Africa, Europe, Asia, the United States, the British West Indies and South and Central America who have made world history. There are stories from 1500 to 6000 words in length of great Egyptian rulers and mes-siahs; Islamic conquerors, writers, poets and singers; African rulers who conquered Spain and gave her its finest culture so far; the exploits of Hannibal of Carthage whose military tactics are still taught in leading white academies; Terence, most famous of all the Latin stylists and playwrights, and the beautiful love story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

There are also the stories of Antar, one of the world's greatest poets and warriors, of Malik Ambar, famed Negro Sultan of India; of Eugene Chen, who next to Sun Yet Sen did most to found the present Chinese Republic and was of Negro-Chinese parentage, and of Ibn Saud, foremost living ruler of Islam in its resistance to white domination.

Africa is represented with 32 great men and women beginning with Abraha, Ethiopian Emperor of 350 A. D. to Haile Selassie. How these Africans fought off the European invaders and defeated many of them are thrillingly told. Especially striking are those of Nzingha, Queen of Angola; Mulai Ismael, most extra-ordinary ruler of the 18th century whose ships raided the coasts of Europe and the British Isles for slaves while the whites were raiding Africa; of Chaka, formidable Zulu King, who originated the "pincer movement" which Hitler used in modern warfare, the Senegalese, Gen. Alfred A. Dobbs, who rose to be commander-in-chief of the French army; Mohammed Ahmed, the Mahdi, who drove the English out of Sudan; Governor-General Felix Eboue, who did so much to ensure allied victory; Glaoui Pasha, Morocco's greatest living man, and Isaac Wallace-Johnson, Africa's foremost labor leader.

* * *

THE European par of the book tells of Negro rulers of Southern Europe, as John VI of Portugal, and writers, generals, statesmen, swordsmen, composers and others. Latin America has accounts of great Negro liberators of even such countries as Argentina which now bars Negroes; as well as other Latin-American presidents, authors, statesmen and scientists. The United States section begins with Nat Turner and ends with living Negroes distinguished in art, music, literature, boxing, education, science, invention and medicine.

One particularly remarkable sketch is that of Al-Jahiz, who is generally said to be the greatest writer of the 9th century, who wrote: "The Superiority in Glory of the Black Race over the White." What he did say is so strong that it has never been translated into any Western language. Rogers gives lengthy extracts from it in English for the first time.

"World's Great Men of Color," is the result of 22 years of research and travel in the remotest corners of the earth by Rogers and was started in 1924. There are many portraits in the book and extensive footnotes telling where everything is found for the benefit of the doubters. As usual the book is published by J. A. Rogers, himself.

The publishers seeming to have no stomach for the story of great Negro achievements, which proves what Mr. Howard Fast said to his Chicago audience about a concerted effort "on the part of some forces" to keep the Negro's rich historical background suppressed. Rogers' address is 37 Morningside ave., New York, N. Y.

Jack Conroy

Off The Book Shelf

"Southern Exposure"

HOW doth the busy little native fascist improve each venom-steeped hour down Dixie way? Stetson Kennedy's "Southern Exposure" (Doubleday, $3.00) is, in effect, a "Who's Who" of Southern rabble-rousers, ranging in prestige from whales to minnows. Kennedy, a native of Florida, presented a none too flattering portrait of his home state in "Palmetto Country" several years ago. Since that time he has wandered about all through the South, keeping his eyes and ears open, and his impressions are enough to arouse alarm in the breasts of the complacent, to say the least.

Kennedy's book is much more ambitious than some of the cursory surveys of living conditions and social problems below the Mason-Dixon line. A historical sketch of the region's economy is supplied, and the relation of the past to the present is analyzed. It may seem that our author is repeating material often used before, as when he demonstrates that the tyranny of debt slavery is only slightly less galling than that of the chattel slavery which preceded it. However, there is no reason why this truism should not be illuminated time and again, particularly when it is illustrated by personal comment as graphic as that of the Negro debt peon who escaped to Chicago and reported on conditions for poor folks back on the big plantation:

Milk for Dogs, Not Babies

"MANY's the time I've wanted milk for my little baby and I would stand there by the dog troughs watching the dogs lap it up. The dogs had their own special cook and were fed lamb chops, while we were so skinny that our ribs stuck out from under our clothes."

The plantation owner kept white and black slaves divided by telling the proud Nordics, "Stay away from them n---rs. I give 'em sowbelly and leather and make 'em like it." At the same time he cautioned the Negroes, "Stay away from them poor white trash. They're one-gallus men and ain't as good as you."

The chapter entitled "Kingfish and Small Fry" would make hilariously funny reading if one were not impelled to stop awhile and think about another comedian with a Charlie Chaplin mustache who was once considered a harmless crackpot, and quite a card. It is difficult for the prognosticator to venture a prediction as to which ones among the screaming hate merchants of today will emerge tomorrow on the top of the festering heap, but there is plenty of material here to ruminate over. Some of the cast of characters are not unknown to Chicagoans. There is Father Terminiello, often called the "Father Coughlin of the South," head of the "Union of Christian Crusaders."

One might be inclined to think, after turning his earlier pages, that Kennedy is ready to give up the South as a bad job, as many pessimists have, to be sure. But toward its close "Southern Exposure" takes on a more hopeful and more cheerful tone as its author scrutinizes the potentialities of the TVA and the excellent work being done by the CIO throughout Dixie. The CIO, because of its enlightened racial policy, Kennedy says, has enormous prestige among Negro workers, displaying proudly the union buttons. A bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church has declared, "When I first heard of the CIO, I asked 'What does it stand for?' The answer I got was; 'White and colored in the same union.' When I heard that I put on my war boots and my preachin' coat, and I been preachin' the principles of CIOism ever since."

Sides with Defender

ANTICIPATING charges that he is "partial" to the CIO and against the AFL, Kennedy states that his position is that of the Chicago **Defender** when it said:

"The hope of Negro America is in the trade union movement, because the preponderant majority of us labor with our hands for a living. Precisely because we see in labor the chance of general freedom and economic emancipation do we fight so hard to open wide the doors of the AFL without regard to race or color. And until the AFL learns that the darker brother is part of the American labor movement without reservation, we cannot but continue to favor the CIO over the AFL in every instance."

Another reminder that more ignoble than noble passions are released in war time is found in Ralph G. Martin's "Boy From Nebraska" (Harper, $2.50). It's the story of Ben Kuroki, a Nisei farmer boy of Nebraska who found neighborliness turn to hate after Pearl Harbor. But he outlived it all to become a hero tailgunner in 58 combat missions.

Book Reviews

The Blood Purge

by J. Saunders Redding

(BLOOD IN THE STREETS: the Life and Rule of Trujillo, by Albert C. Hicks, Creative Age Press, 230 p. $2.75)

Albert C. Hicks is a responsible and reputable newspaper man, and when he tells a story I am inclined to believe him.

The stories he tells in "Blood in the Streets" are sometimes hard to swallow—not because they are incredible: there is too much documentation for that— but because the stomach grows queasy and the heart grows sick.

It is not this reviewer's intention to go into the political implications of this harrowing book, but I would like to point out that "Blood in the Streets" is an indictment of more than the man whose story it tells. It is in an exact sense an indictment of all the Americas.

From Thief to President

Rafael Trujillo, Generalissimo of the Dominican Republic, benefactor of the Fatherland, the Honorable Chief of State, is a son of a witch spawned in the bloodiest corner of hell.

Long before his emergence onto the larger scene of South American politics (helped there, it should be pointed out, by the United States Marines), he was a cheap thief and military racketeer, as his grandfather had been in Cuba.

By a series of schemes and an assortment of trickery, he became President of Santo Domingo, the oldest white settlement in the New World.

Made $50,000 a Day

It is with this event that Trujillo's story begins. It is a story rife with all the crimes in the book, and some that aren't.

Swindler, government monopolist, procurer of women, adulterer, murderer, dictator—the list is too long and too obscene to repeat.

His income (reputedly $50,000 a day!) is every penny scurvily come by, is every penny dishonest. Incidentally, most of his huge fortune is safely kept for him by the National City Bank of New York and the Bank of England.

The Blood Purge

In the last analysis, there is no explaining a mind and a character so twisted and evil as Trujillo's. He is not just a little Hitler. For Hitler there is at least a rationali-zation acceptable to the people who were so misguided as to follow him.

Reading the story of the Haitians, which transfixed with horror at the point in this realization that Trujillo is no less at the phantasm out of some mythical book, one marvels that at the dark age, but a living monster even a crazy whose evil potency has extended far beyond the borders of his tiny country.

One marvels also that less than a year later, when all of the facts were known, high American officials, including President Roosevelt, should do Trujillo the honor of entertaining him.

A Horror Story

You will not like this book, but you will read its every word. It stands as the high point in horror realization that Trujillo is no cheap thief and military racketeer, as his grandfather had been in Cuba.

By a series of schemes and an assortment of trickery, he became President of Santo Domingo, the oldest white settlement in the New World.

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Meet Ellen Tarry

The Afro-American Baltimore Md.
Sat. 6-29-46

Author of 'My Dog Rinty'

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK—One way to make Ellen Tarry angry is to say that she is a writer of "baby books." This, Miss Tarry declares, is a libel and an untruth.

"I write juvenile fiction and it's a very serious business." She thinks that some adult disrespect for childrens' books is part of the "general disinterest in the affairs and problems of children and the dreadful tendency toward thinking that children don't have real problems."

Miss Tarry, in co-operation with Marie Hall Ets, a white writer, is the author of "My Dog Rinty" a Viking Press publication for children 7-12 years old.

The story is quite simple, as any good book for children must be. It deals, in essence, with a dog named Rinty, who causes his owner, David, a great deal of distress until, with the help of a colored newspaper editor, the dog is adjusted to urban life.

Story of Harlem

The book is also a child's story of contemporary Harlem. "I tried to get every important institution in Harlem in the book."

Being a devout Catholic, Miss Tarry uses the book to emphasize some Catholic activities in Harlem. Pictures of two nuns, in full regalia, are shown. "That was because many persons don't know that there are colored nuns. In my opinion this is important."

Miss Tarry has been writing children's books since WPA days. An interviewer finds that she frequently lapses into the short, simple sentences necessarily used in children's book writing. This is particularly true when she is discussing one of her books.

Not Really Rinty

"My Dog Rinty" came about as a result of Viking Press' interest in publishing a book in this field and Miss Tarry's skill as a writer of such stories. "Marie Ets had the idea for the story and we worked it out together."

David, the protagonist in the book, is actually a boy named David De Brecourt. Many of the pictures were taken in Miss Tarry's home. The dog, whose real name is not "Rinty," belongs to Alexander Alland, the photographer, whose picturse illustrate the story.

The dog never stayed overnight in Harlem, but he and David became friends. "David may have wanted to keep him, but David never felt really free in the presence of the white photographer." That is one of the reasons why David never asked Alland for the dog, Miss Tarry thinks.

Limited Vocabularies

"I don't know whether or not such books have much value in aiding racial relations. I only know that I hope they will have meaning because that's why I write them."

In writing children's books one has to keep in mind the "limited vocabularies and experiences of children. Words like 'telephone' and 'switchboards' will stump a beginner," she said.

Miss Tarry pointed out that there is no other book about a colored child in the city. "Most of them deal with rural life." And, she added "So many children live in the city that it is essential to have a book on and about them."

Book Reviews

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.
Sat. 7-20-46

by J. Saunders Redding

(AMERICAN DAUGHTER, by Era Bell Thompson. Univ. of Chicago Press; 301 p. $3.00.)

The fact that "American Daughter" was written under a fellowship grant from the Newberry Library and that it was published by the University of Chicago Press, tends to give an entirely false impression of its genre, and I wish to forestall that impression now.

"American Daughter" is a witty, cleareyed, delightful account of Era Bell Thompson's growing up in America. It has been a long, long time since I've had such a feast of quiet merriment and all unexpectedly too—which made it seem the more to be enjoyed.

Not that "American Daughter" does not have moments which are poignant (Oh, many such!) and freighted.

Read Between the Lines

Indeed, even beneath some of the episodes which twinkle with laughter there is that background of awareness of "something hanging in the stars," of some impending fate that may not be too pleasant.

There was such a moment early in the book, when oldest brother Tom, hit the policeman. The family was living in Des Moines, Iowa, then, and I kept thinking that perhaps the author was planting the tragic seeds that bloom dark and perverted into a Bigger Thomas and a hundred thwarted youths prowling in the lair-like streets of a hundred American cities.

But that was in Iowa, and in North Dakota, where the family moved, the climate was not good for ugly, cankerous human growth. It sometimes seemed to the Thompsons that neither soil nor climate was good for any kind of growth.

Winters were frigid blasts of wind and snow, the howl of coyotes, the death of stock, the loss of human contact. In such a winter Mrs. Thompson died. And in the summer a prairie fire burned off many acres of sturdy wheat.

Era's Personality Counts

But the Thompsons made one good crop, and then father and daughter (the boys, having reached manhood, were gone) moved into town. From here to the end of the book, it is Era's personality that counts.

And what an attractive, sometimes impish, sometimes coy personality it is! It is Era and Germans, and Swedes, and Poles, and the Jewish Opal Block, and the Irish Rileys. And Era always wins because she is not against anybody, and very few are against her.

That Era Bell Thompson happens to be colored is not of great importance, though the fact of her race makes for the brighter sparkle of certain incidents and gives perceptive point—for those who must have points — to whole.

Author's Message

The author might just have well been a Jew or a Swede, or a Pole, or almost of any race or nationality among those who come to America and meet the kind of disembodied prejudice which has its roots in mere pre-judgment.

Though I cannot go along with most of its implications, this, I think, is the serious message the author has for us—that prejudice can be overcome by sheer force of personality.

I do not need to go along with her message; but I did go along with Era. She is quite enough without a message, and I hope she does what she says she wants to do. I hope she starts her magazine—a funny one.

Fight Prejudice With Books

The Worker New York, N.Y. Sun.

By ELIZABETH M. BACON

FORTUNATELY there are more books dealing with Negro discrimination for the oldest age group (that is, 12 years of age and up). Writers see the problems for older children more clearly, they are less afraid to face the issue squarely, and they can write at greater length and so have more room to move around in.

Here are some books that I particularly like. Sun. 7-14-46

WE HAVE TOMORROW by Arna Bontemps. Illustrated with photographs. Houghtin Mifflin. $2.

An eminent Negro writer tells for young people the story of some of the living Negroes who have overcome obstacles and risen to prominence in their respective fields. While the book tends to make the Negro's path to professional eminence seem easier than it really is, nevertheless it inspires the reader with a healthy respect and a hearty admiration for the abilities and determination of the Negro people.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER, PAUL ROBESON: CITIZEN OF THE WORLD by Shirley Graham. Illustrated. Julian Messner. Each $2.

Two excellent junior biographies of great Negroes. The first gives the reader both a warm feeling for Carver as a person and an idea of the tremendous importance of his contribution to science. It is much harder to write about someone who is alive than someone who is dead—and when the person is as many-sided as Paul Robeson, the job is particularly difficult—but Miss Graham has done it well. Most high school youngsters go through a period when they devour biographies, and these two are admirably suited to this need.

CLIMBING OUR FAMILY TREE by Alex Novikoff. Illustrated by John English International Publishers. $1.85.

This lively introduction to evolution answers racist propaganda and misrepresentation by presenting the real facts of man's origin and development. One chapter is devoted entirely to the question of race and deals directly with prejudice and its lack of foundation in fact. Throughout the rest of the book there is a good deal of entertainingly presented information on such aspects of the subject as blood types, and so on.

Kentucky Schools Need Aid From U. S., Educators Say

The Courier-Journal Louisville, Ky.
Wed. 10-9-46

Special to The Courier-Journal

Ames, Iowa, Oct. 9.—Only through federal aid can Kentucky hope to offer adequate educational opportunities for its youth, say two Iowa State College educators—Raymond M. Hughes, president emeritus, and William H. Lancelot, professor of vocational education.

Hughes and Lancelot express this opinion in their new book entitled "Education: America's Magic," published by The Iowa State College Press.

The authors have rated the educational performance of all 48 states. Kentucky, they report, ranks 38th on the basis of criteria used in the study.

The state stands 43d in ability to support education, as measured by its income per child of school age. This fact, further aggravated by the necessity in Kentucky of maintaining two separate school systems, is the basis for the authors' statement that "Kentucky would be unable, without federal help, to provide for its children education comparable with that which is available to most other children of the nation."

Most of the first half of the new book is devoted to the analysis of education state by state. In the last half the authors discuss the more general and often controversial problems, such as the Negro's relation to education, the education of women, educational guidance, and the responsibility of the Federal Government for education in states economically unable to provideadequate educational opportunities.

Dr. Gallages' Book Challenges Jim Crow Church

The Afro-American Miami, Fla. Sat. 10-12-46

One answer to Bilbo's utterances on the rostru mof the Mississippi State Legislature and in the Cave of the Winds on Capitol Hill is daringly presented in Dr. Buell G Gallagher's new book "Color And Conscience." "The Irrepressible Conflict," just published by Harper and Brothers. The first full length treatment of religion and race to appear in timately acquainted with Negro over by the imperial a quarter of a century, this book goes America, is a national direc- of the Roman Empire. minces no words and pulls no tor of the National Association for punches as it lays bare the hypo- the Advancement of Colored Peo- crisy and evasiveness of the Jim ple, and was for ten years presi- Crow church. It is a flaming in- dent of Talladega College. dictment of what passes for Chris- Now a professor of Christianity in America, as well as an Ethics at the Pacific School of exposure of the double dealings Religion, Berkley, California. Dr. of political demagogues a n d Gallagher in this book marshalls church politicians of every sec- all the evidence of the Christian tion of the country. tradition to show what the

The author has won for himself a name for honesty and fearlessness in his dealings. He is church of early times was

earlier irrepressible conflict, the arrogance and the Civil War. It is a pelude to the and the New Emancipation. of Chris- a white man's first time, these are presented little known facts are presented in the general reader.

This book may wel lprove to be as influential in our century as the writings of William and Harriet the oratory of the heated up to the inclusive Fedeick Douglas in the contoversy which led up to the

The MAGAZINE RACK

By MARTHA MILLET

It is a sign of our time, a time of violence trying to beat back upsurge out of oppression, that so many writers are turning to the south for their themes. Feudal, slave-holding psychology and relationships, having long outlived the slave system itself, are in violent collision with ideas and movements of people seeking to gain equal status with white Americans for the millions of Negro Americans.

A theme of great magnitude and complexity is this South in ferment. Peter Taylor's story, **A Long Fourth**, in the **Sewanee Review** (Summer 1946) attempts the treatment of this theme by searching relationships in one comfortable Nashville household over a fourth of July weekend.

Harriet, the mother, a backward type who is still the southern belle in her mind and in the minds of her family "was yet guided in some matters by well remembered words of her mother who had been dead for thirty years. In other matters she was guided by the words of Sweetheart. In still others she was guided by what Son said. Her two daughters guided her in nothing. Rather, she was ever inclined to instruct them by quoting Mama, Sweetheart, or Son."

Sweetheart, of course, is Harriet's husband, a doctor. The girls are both over six feet tall. The petite mother who gets "prettier by the year" is at once aghast at and sorry for them and their suitoriess prospects. Son has become kind of undefined radical—for Nashville—since going North. He is coming home for the Fourth and will then enter the Army. He brings with him Ann Prewitt, the editor of a birth control magazine.

Throughout the visit Harriet is outraged and even ill because the Negro servant Mattie has expressed in an unheard-of way her concern for her nephew who will either go into a war factory or the Army.

Mattie has the "impudence" to say, "as though stunned at her own thoughts, 'it's like you losin' Mr. Son. BT is gwine too."

Harriet hates and would like to get rid of BT, a big young man brought up from childhood by Mattie. She is left perfectly speechless at Mattie's comparison of her son's situation with that of this "black, lazy-looking negro" (sic) whose face to her "had ever seemed devoid of expression."

Now BT as a character has had two strikes put on him by the author before Harriet's view of him enters the picture. He is not dignified by a name. It is stated as fact that he smells, and that he debauches with prostitutes in his shack. The character is portrayed as a monstrosity in the same way Negroes are misrepresented in comic strips, film and cheap fiction.

In tackling the sickness of the South and its upper strata, whose thinking has not progressed much since the days of the slave ships, Mr. Taylor makes an approach to reality. His presentation of the Negro servant, however, is at times lifted bodily from stock distortions, not from the living material itself.

S. I. Hayaka

Defender 'Really The Blues'

THE PUBLICATION of "Really the Blues," by Milton Mezzrow and Bernard Wolfe (the story is Mezzrow's; the writing is Wolfe's, with a great deal of vocabulary help from Mezzrow; the book is published by Random House, $3) will at once gladden and disturb the Negro community. Chicago, Ill.

book because Mezzrow, who is a traditional hot-jazz clarinet player and a sympathetic intimate of practically all the great Negro jazz men, goes about as far in his respect for Negro achievement and his love of Negro life as it is possible to go. Indeed, Mezzrow has completely given up being white—he is of Russian-Jewish extraction, but he is proudest of the fact that he was registered with Selective Service as Negro. Sat. 11-30-46

Mezzrow's insights into the Negro community are often profound. He perceives the deep cultural difference between the middle-class white, who is brought up to expect a great deal of life and tends to get ugly when he doesn't get it, and the lower-class Negro, who "never had anything before and never expects anything after, so when the blues get him he comes out smiling and without any evil feeling." The contrast he draws between these two sets of evaluations provides material which the sociologist and psychologist might well study in documentation of what Karen Horney has called the "neurotic personality of our time." In this respect, it is clear that it is the middle-class white who is the neurotic.

Knowing How to Handle Disaster

BEING brought up with sanguine expecta-

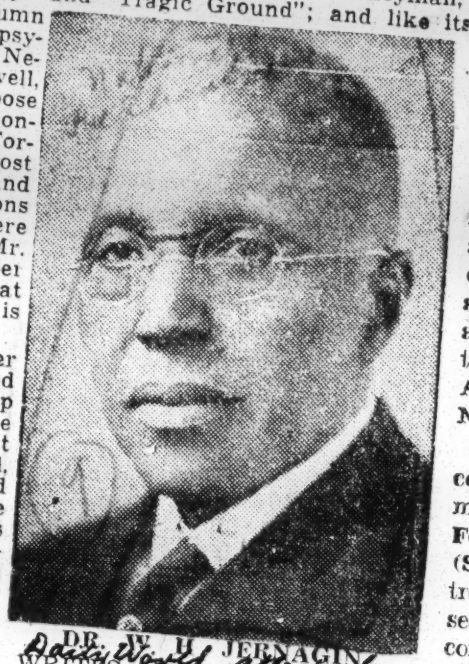
that lies deep- especially the educated classes. Most of the
an personality. things Mezzrow loves about Negro life are things
hers like him the educated Negroes would just as soon have
me passion as forgotten. The jive-talk of Harlem and Chicago,
always with a the smoking of marijuana, the drinking, the rest-
prise only the less and the quick-witted rebelliousness of the
who never rec- fly cats of Amsterdam ave. and South Parkway,
til it has been the frequent encounters with the law—these are
who find their matters that bust Mezzrow's vest-buttons with
es will know pride in the Negro people.
zzrow on the Negroes, especially college graduates and post-
chet is not a al clerks and such law-abiding people, will read
on Chapman's "Really the Blues" with mixed feelings. But I
atcher of the believe they should read the book. It is an as-
tonishing job of social analysis and insight, in
spite of the fact that it is written from beginning
to end in what practically amounts to jive-talk.

Distressing to Negor Upper Classes

ons, the white man doesn't know how to handle
aster. But the Negro, whether in poverty or
jail, knows how to meet it and to teach others
meet it. Speaking of his experiences in jail,
zzrow says, "There aren't many people in the
ld with as much sensitivity and plain human
pect for a guy as the Negroes. I'd be stepping
ng in the line, feeling low and lonesome, and
of a sudden one of the boys in the colored
. . . would call out, 'Hey, boy, whatcha
w,' and smile, and I'd feel good all over.
r found many white men with that kind of
t instinct and plain friendly feeling that hits
at the psychological moment like a tonic."
so, Mezzrow understands, perhaps better
any other writer, the profound connection
een Negro folk experience and jazz, which
musical expression. The passion for es-
experience and expression is, after all, the
NEVERTHELESS, Mezzrow's jazz auto-
biography will be disturbing to many Negroes,

A House in the Uplands," by Erskine Caldwell, (Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc., N. Y., $2.50) is the latest opus of the author of those American classics, "Tobacco Road," "God's Little Acre," "Journeyman," "Trouble in July," "Georgia Boy" and "Tragic Ground"; and like its predecessors, the present volumn is a master piece of Southern psychology and worthlessness. The Negro owes a debt to Mr. Caldwell, for he has done more to expose the rottenness of the plantation-system than any other writer. Formerly, the characters were almost all the poor white trash types and even some of the cotton barons might have agreed that they were a blight upon the land. Now, Mr. Caldwell reaches into the upper brackets and puts an aristocrat (?) under his lens. The picture is fascinatingly nauseaus.

Grady Dunbar and his mother live on a run-down, mortgaged plantation where the Negro help is still held in peonage and the white renters are as subservient as Indian coolies. Grady is tall, handsome and dark, reckless and lecherous, lazy, ignorant (in spite of a law course) and neurotic. His mother is a fat, ignorant, opinionated, foul-mouthed fool, who spoils her son as do all the women. For as wild and mean as Grady is, he still towers above the abyssmal ignorance and crudeness of most other males thereabouts. He has learned a few tricks of culture and has had good food and clothes, which in a country dominated by the lowest passions and full of poverty and sloth, makes him seem superior in his milieu. In the end, after dragging everyone who touches him through the slime, he is slain by a gambler for bad debts. In another environment, he would have been rather decent. Twice he showed an awareness of the low state of his morals but his vanity trapped him. Bloated ego is as poisonous to the system as a bloated liver. It prevents its victim from ever trying to improve, first, for fear of failure, second, because it would be an admission of imperfection which would be intolerable. Cotton has exacted a terrible price in human character in this country.



DR. W. H. JERNAGIN WRITES BOOK

Daily World Thurs 9-1-46

Dr. Jernagin, president, National Baptist Sunday School and BTU Congress, is the author of a book entitled: "Christ at the Battlefront." The book is based on Dr. Jemison's travels in Southwest Pacific during the war where he visited soldiers as head of the chaplains, and under his preaching over 2,000 soldiers accepted Christ. His books are on sale to delegates for $1.25. Dr. Jemison is a world-famed Baptist Youth leader.

Romantic Story By Cecile Gilmore; Atlanta Author Pens Vibrant Novel

INHERITED HUSBAND claiming the estate for her daughter. Equally as impulsively Coles Cecile Gilmore. Samuel Curl accepts. Inc., New York, 1946; 28(The whole thing is a gamble pages—$2. for Melissa's happiness and Marco is a charming gentleman. In Cecile Gilmore grew up on Haiti, Coles and Marco soon are Peachtree Street in Atlanta. In devoted to each other and in love. the space of five novels she has But Cole's fierce devotion for her become an established writer of daughter and her fear of the romance. Her scintillating "crazy, beautiful and cruel counstories are vibrant and charming try" brings torture to Marco. and above all, well written. Here And when Cole's glamorous s her newest and finest to date. cousin Isabelle arrives. t appeared in a greatly shortened Here is mother love and a triversion in Redbook magazine. angle that increases in intensity hose who haven't read it will as the story progresses to a clind it entertaining hot weather max in a dangerous adventure. eading. Mysticism, voodooism, superstiColes Pettingill finds herself tion in enchanted Haiti give an almost destitute young widow exciting background to this story ith a young daughter. Suddenly by the author of FOXFIRE, e becomes, as guardian of FEATHER OF DOUBT, BRIGHT llicent, a co-sharer in a run- ENCHANTMENT, and WE BEwn hotel and plantation in LONG TOGETHER. Cecile Gilmore's fans will go for this one iti. Marco Lacey is the other of the inheritance. Impul- and they are increasing in numely Marco proposes marriage bers with every new title by this the only practical means of popular Southern writer.—R. G.

Montgomery, Ala. Advertiser 8-11-46

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How the Home Front Thought and Behaved in World War II

N.Y. Times Magazine
WHILE YOU WERE GONE: A Report on Wartime Life in the United States. Edited by Jack Goodman. 625 pp. New York: Simon & Schuster. $3.50.
Jun 2-17-46

By SHEPARD STONE

MILLIONS of men are home from the war and most of them were never quite so far away as their letters and redeployment demonstrations may have indicated. They need a few weeks to get used to home, but otherwise they fit in. The United States is no mystery to them.

Thanks to a generally efficient postoffice, to the Armed Forces Radio Service, USO shows, movies, midget magazines and to a few newspapers, Verviers and Frankfurt were psychologically always nearer to Trenton than they were geographically. The dials of "liberated" radios tuned in Bob Hope, Charlie McCarthy and other favorite programs, mercifully without the advertising plugs; the movies brought "The Look" and other "The's" to Spa and to the Philippines; overseas and service editions of newspapers, magazines and books helped with the news, with Dick Tracy and Joe Palooka and with the latest mystery stories. Not that the average American soldier wasn't homesick for his girl, his wife, the drug store around the corner. But so far as his country was concerned he had parts of it with him. The things and problems at home that were mysteries to him while he was overseas had been mysteries to him in his civilian days.

There were thousands of men overseas, however, who needed more than the movies, the comics and the radio, more than the brevity and selectivity of the "Stars and Stripes" to keep them in touch with their country. For these men, and women, "While You Were Gone" will be a good start. Here is a balance sheet of wartime America, a book that describes accomplishments, clears away illusions, defines problems and points out opportunities. This report, written by twenty-six qualified Americans, will help veterans understand significant problems of civilian life. And, if someone who has been home only a few days may say so, this book will be almost as enlightening for those who never wore a uniform.

Jun 2-17-46

LET us, as good Army procedure dictates, start with a summary. "While You Were Gone" reports to returning service men and women how the country thought and behaved during the war; how it was governed (Congress didn't do too well, it seems); how labor, industry, agriculture, science did their jobs; what the country saw, read and heard, and how it prepared for tomorrow. The twenty-six writers include Allan Nevins, Paul Gallico, Carey McWilliams, Jonathan Daniels, Thomas L. Stokes, Henry F. Pringle, R. J. Thomas, Donald M. Nelson, Russell Lord, Gerald Wendt, Margaret Mead, Dan Parker, James Thurber, Lester Markel, Norman Corwin, Eric Hodgins, Raymond Rubicam, Lewis Gannett, Wolcott Gibbs, Milton Caniff, Bosley Crowther, Charles Hurd, Charles Bolté and Senator Joseph H. Ball. These men and women caught the idea which Jack Goodman, the editor of the symposium, put before them. Each writer talks straight and waves no flags. Though America's accomplishment on the home front during the war was gigantic this book is humble. It spends as much time on problems and defects as it does on services performed. It uncovers the shoddy as well as the noble.

"While You Were Gone" is not the story of a strange world. Perhaps that is best explained by Professor Nevins when he writes in his chapter "How We Felt About the War":

> The returning warrior will take one step toward a comprehension of our wartime attitudes if he realizes that the distinction between the home front and fighting front is partly unreal; unreal, that is, in terms of basic psychology. The fighters of course suffer greater perils, pain and hardships. All honor to them! But this does not mean that soldier and civilian attitudes are fundamentally different. The fighter justly resents the slack complacency of some stay-at-homes, the cowardice of others, and the profiteering of still more. They should be put in the foxholes for five minutes! But if left at home, the fighters as a body would doubtless behave much as did the civilians as a body. And if compelled to go to the front lines, the civilians would have behaved much as the fighters did.

Jun 2-17-46

ACCORDING to Professor Nevins the mood of the United States in World War II differed greatly from that in previous conflicts. There was grim attention to the job, with little enthusiasm for parades, brass bands and fireworks. The nation was more unified than it had been in earlier wars. American labor and industry produced miracles. And despite occasional shortages, men at the front knew the nation behind them was turning out munitions and machines. This writer will never forget the amazement of our first PW's soon after Normandy was invaded. The Germans looked down to Omaha beach and saw great snakes of American men and supplies coming out of the water and winding up the cliffs. Here were mechanized wonders they had never seen. "Mein Gott," they said, and they knew then that Germany had lost the war.

The most popular movies, the best-sellers, the biggest scandals, the highest batting averages, the song hits, the divorces and marriages, they are all chronicled in "While You Were Gone." So, too, the record of Congress and a handy table (keep for future reference) showing how Congressmen voted. Here is Jonathan Daniels' tribute to the man who seemed so near to men overseas, F. D. R. R. J. Thomas, president of the United Automobile Workers, and Donald M. Nelson, former chairman of the War Production Board, tell the twin story of the gigantic accomplishment of American labor and industry. Mr. Thomas dispels the idea that the American worker went out on frequent strikes. Here, too, are handy suggestions to returning veterans by Charles Hurd, veterans' editor of THE NEW YORK TIMES, and Charles G. Bolté, chairman of the American Veterans Committee.

Gerald Wendt's chapter on Science is less interesting for the description of the progress made during the war than for the outline he draws of things to come. Atomic, or as he prefers to call it nuclear, power, electronics, synthetic industries will carry us rapidly into a new world. Dr. Wendt's chapter is among the most important contributions in the book. His new world will not be much fun to live in unless we learn to understand and use the tools science is giving us.

Jun 2-17-46

A FORMER newspaper man will be forgiven if he devoted most time to the chapters on newspapers by Lester Markel, Sunday editor of THE NEW YORK TIMES, on radio by Norman Corwin, and on the magazines by Eric Hodgins, a vice president of Time, Inc. These men tell openly what is right and what is wrong with our newspapers, magazines and radio and they support their arguments with facts and figures that every reader and listener will want to know. Mr. Markel's and Mr. Hodgins' gentle differences of opinion are pointed with wit. The reader will have to decide between them.

The men overseas talked, of course, about their children, about women. They went out with English girls, French girls, German girls, Japanese girls. But always they wondered about their wives and the girls at home. They will find some, but not all of the answers in the chapter "What Happened to the Younger People," by Anna W. M. Wolf and Irma Simonton Black and in the chapter "The Women in the War" by Margaret Mead. All in all American women and children pitched in and did a remarkable job in factories, in trade and on the farms, helping to produce the materials of war. There was delinquency among some children. Some women lived for today without thought of tomorrow. In general, however, it is likely that returning American men and American women are not finding it hard to walk in step.

Most delightful of all in this encyclopedic work is James Thurber's incomparable study "What the Animals Were Up To." How different American animals were from others Mr. Thurber does not say. But evidently they kept their heads, they didn't allow Hitler or Hirohito to disturb them and—with Fala leading them—made headlines as they never had before.

Jun 2-17-46

THE animals did not bother with the atomic bomb. But this book shows that almost everybody else did. For the end of the war found little flag-waving in the United States, but considerable humility, and fear and wonder. Perhaps the most lasting impresssion of the war, except for those whose sons or brothers or husbands were lost, and for those who came back crippled, was the threat of atomic power, even though the United States was fortunate to have the secret. "While You Were Gone" poses many problems, and the veteran, as a civilian, must help answer them. Should the United States share the atomic secret? Will the nation find a solution to minority and racial problems? Will our democracy throw up leaders capable of handling problems in the international, atomic world of the future?

An overwhelming majority of men in uniform has been anxious to turn civilian again. There are many legitimate gripes about the services and they are widely known. But at the same time many men and women returning to civilian life are somewhat puzzled by the indifference to some of our common problems. Somewhere in many men coming back there is a feeling of comradeship for men they served with, of obligation to causes bigger than themselves. Perhaps this will change, perhaps it will not.

Certainly there are not a few men who believe that in peacetime, with great national and international problems made acute by the atomic discoveries, we have obligations and responsibilities as well as privileges. Mr. Roosevelt, many men in uniform have said, would have known that. Perhaps he would have done something about it. At any rate, "While You Were Gone" helps us understand the somewhat confused views in Washington and in the country today. Since this book is fodder for all, not only for the men newly out of uniform, it may help us in the days ahead to find the way to one another and to work together as we did four years ago.

Red, Hot And Blue

New York Times
DUKE ELLINGTON. By Barry Ulanov. 322 pp. New York: Creative Age Press. $3.
3-10-46

IN this uncommonly well-written volume, Barry Ulanov, editor of Metronome, tells the life story of one of the more controversial yet important figures in contemporary popular music — Duke Ellington. Mr. Ulanov belongs to the critical school which heralds the Duke not only as the leader of a consistently outstanding orchestra but also as a composer of importance—both from the standpoint of his contribution to the musical art and to a greater understanding of the Negro race. If one cannot accept the author's premise in full, it should not detract from an expert presentation of a problem—the tremendous odds and prejudices which a Negro musician must overcome before any real success can be his. Mr. Ulanov tells that story vividly and fluidly.

The Duke was born Edward Kennedy Ellington on April 29, 1899, in Washington, D. C., and formed his first band in 1917. From then on it was a constant uphill struggle until the group caught on in 1926 and later became a Cotton Club fixture. At the same time he was becoming a composer, enjoying not only commercial acceptance but also increasing recognition from the high priests of jazz, if not long underwear sages.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Ulanov's book becomes preoccupied with the band as such and allows —until a sentence now and ther

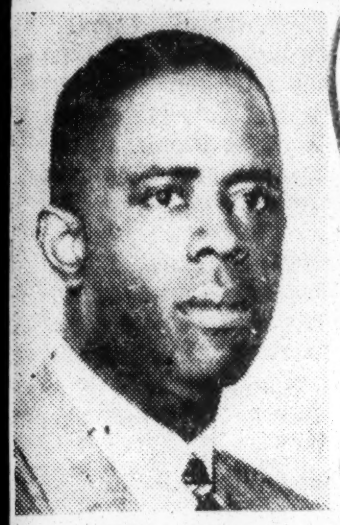
JACK GOULD.

Books of the Times

*MY AFRICA. By Mbonu Ojike. 350 pages. Day. $3.75.

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

MBONU OJIKE, a native of Nigeria, does not like to see his country ruled by British administrators any more than do Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Like the rival Indian leaders, Mr. Ojike has absorbed Western ideas of freedom and democracy and wishes to see them applied to his native land. Also like them, he is intensely proud of the culture and civilization of his country and does not admit that they are, in any except a material way, inferior to those of Europe and America. His plea for a place in the United Nations for a free Nigeria, along with his memories of his childhood and much effusive praise of African life, may be found in his interesting and contentious book, "My Africa."*



Mbonu Ojike

Mr. Ojike was born in the remote village of Ndizuogu about thirty-four years ago. His father was a local wise man and village elder, a man of considerable importance and a dogged opponent of the corrupting customs of the white interlopers. His compound housed some 100 persons, ten wives, nineteen sons, thirty-one daughters and various other relatives and domestics. He was a trader and before the British put a stop to it he was a slave owner and a purveyor of mercenary warriors, much in the fashion of the fifteenth-century Italian condottiere.

Eager for Western Learning

The little Mbonu was a sensitive intellectual from infancy, so poor at wrestling, racing and other sports that he won the nickname "Mr. Tears." But Christian missionaries were penetrating even to Ndizuogu and two of Mr. Ojike's elder brothers defied their father's wishes and attended mission schools. So it was natural for Mr. Ojike to follow their example. He swallowed Western learning with voracious zeal, adapted the Christian name of Robinson Crusoe, studied for the ministry, took correspondence courses in Latin and mathematics from Oxford University and eventually left Nigeria to study in the United States. The clever and ambitious African child who had acted in mission school versions of "Julius Caesar" and "The Merchant of Venice" found America bewildering, but not so much so that he did not pursue his education with conspicuous success, become a lecturer and now the author of a book.

facts he cites in support of this claim are extremely interesting and will certainly be news to most of his readers. Nigerian pottery, woodcarving, sculpture, music, dancing and metalwork can all make claims to distinction, as recent Western enthusism for African art recognizes. But Mr. Ojike also claims that Nigerian concepts of law, justice, religion and morality are equally notable.

Nigerian society is based on the family and on elder wiseman. Villages have local kings, clans more important kings, states head kings. Many of the dynasties are ancient and many of the kings, according to Mr. Ojike, are able and just rulers. Polygamy, Mr. Ojike says, is a perfectly reasonable local social custom. Marriages arranged by parents for economic and class reasons (as in France) are superior to those made by the persons directly concerned. "Youth is not the time to fall in love." Because of their superior culture Nigerians are broad-minded, tolerant, kind, gentle, artistic, friendly, hospitable, cooperative, sympathetic and soulful.

"My Africa" is interesting, not so much for its literary merit, which is understandably limited, but because of its importance as an expression of the nationalism which is now sweeping through the educated classes of so many countries in the so-called "colonial" areas. Mr. Ojike is proud of his people, proud of their culture, convinced that British rule is corrupt, inefficient and unjust. In fact, his emotion is so strong he indulges in several wildly exaggerated statements. "Primitive man is nowhere to be found on that continent (Africa)." How about the pygmies, bushmen and Hotentots? "All nations and peoples are capable of self-government."

Proud of Nigeria's Native Culture

Speaking of his native Nigeria, which he estimates to have a population of 33,000,000, Mr. Ojike insists that the native village culture based on agriculture and handcrafts without written records is an advanced civilization. Many of the

From such statements it can be seen that reading "My Africa" can leave an American reader a little breathless with astonishment. Where are the elephants? Mr. Ojike says he never saw one until he went to the London Zoo. Where are the cannibals? Mr. Ojike never knew any among his friends. But he has much to say about Nigerian labor unions, Nigerian trousered (white-collar) workers, Nigerian need of industrialization and American technical assistance. It isn't only in Harlem that there's a new world a'coming.

But "My Africa" is based on a curious paradox, one that appears in numerous other books about "colonial" peoples. If Nigerian civilization is so wonderful, why do Nigerians like Mr. Ojike toil so heroically to master Western culture? Why do they take pride in railroads and airfields and plead for industrialization, the most conspicuous attributes of the sordid, commercial, materialistic Westerners?

Walter White

Negro Heroes In Fiction

CHESTER HIMES, whose dynamic "If He Hollers, Let Him Go," which was reviewed in this column on December 22, 1945, has written so excellent a letter on the column of January 5th, which called for a novel on the Negro in World War II, that I want to share it with you. Mr. Himes points out that white Americans get both a sadistic and masochistic joy out of reading stories of Negro suffering but are unwilling to pay money for stories about Negro achievement.

This was recently borne out by an experience of this writer. One of the very largest mass circulation magazines manifested an interest in an article made up of instances where, under the stress of war and danger, men shed their prejudices. The article was written but on submission to the editor was returned because "it does not fit into our editorial policy." Magazine after magazine to which it was submitted returned the same answer. Negro writers, therefore, face another hurdle in their efforts to tell the truth as they see it. But Mr. Himes states the problem so much better than I can that, with his permission, I share his letter with you.

Two Novels Have Priority

"I HAVE just finished reading your column in the January 5th Defender and I would like to say I agree with you. One of the best stories I can imagine at this time would be a well-plotted, well-written, dramatic story of a Negro or Negroes who have overcome these odds from without and these frustrations from within and won some accepted point of value.

"I, myself, have always wanted to write that story. Several things have stopped me. First, because I didn't know it well enough. I suppose here it is your cue to say, 'To hell with the others.' However, having worked pretty long and not too successfully in the field of popular fiction, I might have been able to write a fairly acceptable 'For Whom the Bell Tolls' Negro story from imagination.

"But I had to write two other stories first, one which I wrote years ago which will be published some time in the future; and the other the story of the hammer of oppression, most of which I cleared from my own mind, no matter how successfully to the public, in 'If He Hollers...'

Low Sales Value

"HOWEVER, I feel that I am like other Negro writers and other Negro writers are like myself. I admire heroes. I have that peculiar sort of imagination wherein I can imagine myself acting heroically against great odds; and just the imagination can give me more than the publication of a book on pressured frustration could ever give me, as an individual.

"But there are many things against writing about Negro heroes. It requires a consummate skill, first of all. You have to write like God to sell a Negro hero to an American white public. In most instances it is a thankless task. White people of America can stand to hear the bitter cries of a suppressed people; in an odd sort of way it purges the slovenness from their ambitions and impels them to drive on to great white supremacy; it is a sort of bitter-sweet inspiration which we, Negroes, derive from the blues. They can stand hearing a 'nigger' cry; and therefore to a 'nigger' it can be financially successful. But there are very few white people, including most white liberals, who sincerely want to hear of Negro heroes.

"However, if you give us a chance, we'll get some Negro heroes in—I, personally will make you that promise."

People, Politic And Places

New York: The Last Seven Years

NEW YORK ADVANCING. Victory Edition, Edited by Rebecca B. Rankin. xxvi+393 pp. New York: Municipal Reference Library. $1.

NEW YORKERS—7½ million of them—govern themselves than many another aspect of government, gets only a few paragraphs' notice; and any book on a tax budget that averages about the city, written by out to about a dollar a person is likely to be a certain They live and work in 383,000 personal style New York's citi illustrations (over 150) and a buildings spread over 320 square miles, worship in 7,100 churches and (somehow) crowd their children into 738 public schools. This book is material is offered. With the zens have come to know well—table of remarkable statistics, leads off the book. Then follow "New York Advancing" reports on the borough offices and work of the boards, commissions, departments and authorities that carry

What it takes in money, or ganization and planning to gov ern such a city is described in this third, or Victory, edition o "New York Advancing." The ac count sums up the last seven years of the La Guardia adminis tration and describes how the city met the strains of war and yet found time—and energy—to plan impressive plans for the future. 3-10-46

A final report by F. H. La Guardia—written in that direct personal style New York's citizens have come to know well—leads off the book. Then follows "New York Advancing" reports on the borough offices and work of the boards, commissions, departments and authorities that carry on the government of the city.

"New York Advancing" has two faults. Civilian Defense, which affected the lives of the city's citizens more personally

E. N. JENKS.

9 1946

ERA OF HOPE

Historical Album Wins High Praise

The Constitution
Atlanta, Ga.
Sun. 10-13-46

ALBUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY, 1853-1893. James Truslow Adams, Editor in Chief. Scribners. 435 pp. $7.50.

How should an elder historian pass life's golden afternoon? As Charles Beard does, attempting to prove that FDR bombed the unsuspecting Japs at Pearl Harbor? As Carlton Hayes does appeasing Franco? Or as James Truslow Adams does, cutting out and pasting pictures in historical albums?

Frankly we believe the third approach has more psycho-therapeutic value. When aided by a gifted staff of editors it may even produce very distinguished volumes.

Volume III of this handsome series of albums covers the span 1853 to 1893, which, despite a War Between the States, Indian skirmishes, major depressions, the rise of the old Ku Klux Klan, carpetbag looting of the South and other unpleasant incidents, now seems to be the Golden Age.

At least in the North and West the postwar era was optimistic because an entire empire was being opened up and settled by the transcontinental railroads.

The wounds of bleeding Kansas were slowly healed, the pony express galloped into the past, the golden spike was driven; a reunited nation (North and South, East and West) went roaring forward with mechanical invention and economic prosperity, seldom questioning its methods and motives.

Nearly half this book is given over to the War Between the States and Reconstruction, rich with Brady photographs and drawings from Harper's Weekly. The rest of the volume carries American history up to the Chicago Columbian Exposition and the end of the frontier.

It was an era of hope. And at least for a few hours you can recapture the spirit of America at High Noon—naive but gloriously confident.—S. N.

VET PUBLISHES BOOK ON 'NOTHINGNESS OF WAR'

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md. Sat.

CHICAGO—In his recently published book, "The Nothingness of War," Albert P. Cage, World War II veteran, explains who lost the war and condemns selfish governments.

Frederick Douglass: 'A Star Pointed North'

The Worker
New York, N. Y.

"A STAR POINTED NORTH," by Edmund Fuller Harper. $2.75

Reviewed by
BERNICE CAREY
Sun. 12-1-46

Frederick Douglass, the great Negro leader of Civil War times, has for me and I'm sure for many others, been a vague an almost legendary figure, in our history.

The contribution of this novel based on his life is that it makes Frederick Douglass as real and vivid a personality as if he were a personal acquaintance living today.

The story covers Douglass' life from his 16th year in 1832 through the Civil War. A few brief scenes indicate the course of his life after the end of the war, but the book deals primarily with the personal growth and activity which made Douglass an outstanding leader in the anti-slavery movement preceding the outbreak of violence between the North and South.

Fred Bailey, as Douglass was known during his period of enslavement, belonged to a Maryland white man, Thomas Auld. The first section of **A Star Pointed North** tells the story of Auld's attempt to "break" his spirited, intelligent "property" into suitable condition for a field hand.

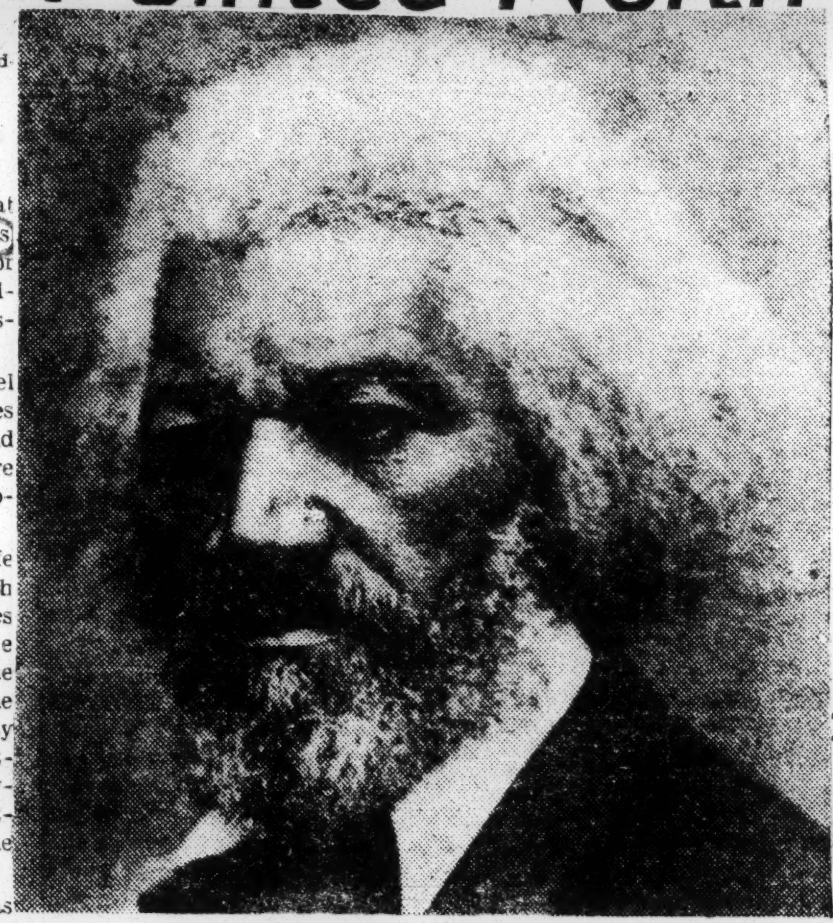
As a child Fred had learned, inadvertently as far as his masters were concerned, to read and write a little. This smattering of education, combined with his courage and indomitable longing for freedom, empowered Fred, in his 22d year to escape to the North, a fugitive slave.

The young Negro did not know of the Underground Railroad and its white and black hands which could have aided him along the way. But in New York the Railroad and the Abolitionists found him and brought him safely to New Bedford, where for several years the newly-named Frederick Douglass worked as a laborer, supporting himself and the freewoman, Anna, who had come up from Baltimore to marry him.

As the young man's education advanced under the contacts made and the larger horizons opened to his eyes during this time, he insisted upon breaking out of the role of a mere "exhibit" and demanded and won the right to speak more broadly from the platform simply as one of the Abolitionists, not only as a "fugitive slave."

This quality in Frederick Douglass is the frame upon which **A Star Pointed North** is built, his ability to grow in leadership and to assert his right to use himself and his powers to the greatest advantage to the cause of human freedom, regardless of the opposition he often encountered from those closest to him.

All his life Frederick Douglass was a breaker of bonds. He dared to break with Garrison's narrow approach to the question of slavery, with his reliance on moral suasion and its inability to comprehend the wide political scope of the anti-slavery issue, which required astute tactics and flexible maneuvering.



FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Some of the most dramatic and moving portions of the book deal with Douglass' relations with John Brown, whose daring scheme which culminated in the seizure of Harper's Ferry, was in Douglass' eyes, the fuse that would eventually abolish slavery.

Frederick Douglass' own constant struggles to see and to act upon the course which would make his own contribution to the cause most effective is exemplified in the conflict with John Brown on the question of strategy.

The whole of Frederick Douglass' life was involved in the struggle to free his people; and so well has Edmund Fuller told his story that there is no extricating the public and private sides of Douglass' life. His relations with Anna, his wife, have all the elements of a love story, with even the development of a triangle situation during the course of their married life. All these emotional matters affected and were affected by Douglass' role as a public leader.

One meets many famous figures of the time in **A Star Pointed North**, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, even the Presidents Lincoln and Johnson. 12-1-46

As a woman I was pleased to find mention of Douglass' friendship and support of Susan B. Anthony, the great woman's suffrage leader. That Frederick Douglass was a man of broad vision, comprehending that the struggles of his own people were linked to those of all who strive to improve their lot is revealed by the masthead motto he used for his newspaper, "North Star": "Right is of no sex—truth is of no color—God is the father of us all, and we are all brethren."

As the book closes, in the year 1877, the author has put these words in Douglass' mind, "The struggle is on again. There will be no rest from it for generations."

We who must still carry the struggle on can take inspiration and guidance from the life of this man who was born with no more status in society than a domesticated animal, yet who fought through to help win the first and most necessary victory.

Negro's Apotheosis

The Times Book Review

A STAR POINTED NORTH. By Edmund Fuller. 361 pp. New York: Harper & Bros. $2.75.

Times

By SAUL CARSON

WITH his fast-moving, well-written, at times beautiful historical novel based on the life of Frederick Douglass, Edmund Fuller has performed a double service. He has bridged an aching gap in American history; and he has done this in a thoroughly enjoyable book in which a great man is handled with dignity and warmth, in which a Negro hero is treated as the American hero that he was.

New York, N.Y.

Few of America's giants of the nineteenth century have been more shamefully neglected than Frederick Douglass, the escaped slave whose public life spanned the history of his country from 1841 to 1895 and whose impact has not yet spent itself. Fuller's book is the first full-length portrait of Douglass since Booker T. Washington damned his great predecessor with faint praise and philistine treatment in 1906. The historian who discusses the abolition movement generally highlights the colorful careers of William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips and pays almost no attention to Douglass. This is not merely because the two were white and the third a Negro. Garrison and Phillips illustrate the fanaticism of obverse secession-ists who shouted "No Union with slaveholders"; Douglass, who had been brought into the abolition movement by those same men, broke away from such folly and fought the fight inside the framework of the Constitution. The historians will find many Reconstruction leaders to picture as malicious, vengeful, swag-gering carpetbaggers. They overlook Douglass because he doesn't fit such a pattern.

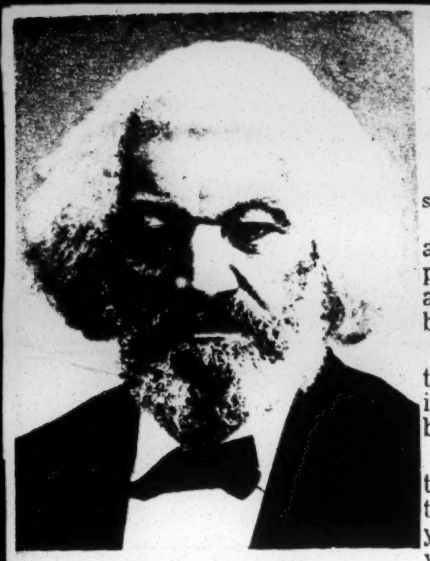
tracks to look for leadership among the Negroes they tend to find comfort in Booker T. Washington's willingness to let the Negro cultivate his own Jim Crow garden — not in the militancy of a Douglass.

Sun. 11-3-46

EDMUND FULLER, within limitations, has answered these tendencies. In his story Douglass grows to great heights, but the slave-house-boy who is hired out to a professional slave-breaker because, at 16, he had taught himself to read, preach and lead, enters quite naturally (three years after his escape from slavery) into the Garrison group. The motivations that brought Douglass to a point where he outshone his former mentors are told well, excitingly, and with a good deal of sage divination.

Douglass at his height is seen as politically more astute and more malicious, vengeful, swag-gering carpetbaggers. They overlook Douglass because he doesn't fit such a pattern. And growth is logical, understandable, as the ex-slave of his sinews; he acts more rationally than Color, to Arms!" Fuller paints a somber, moving sequence in the mature than Garrison and Phillips in which Abraham Lincoln convinces the ex-slave of his sin-

Book Reviews



Frederick Douglass.

cerity. And there is excitement in the story of Douglass standing up to President Johnson, taking the fight for passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the people—and ultimately helping to put those amendments into the Constitution.

The student of Douglass will find some objections in Fuller's treatment. He will quarrel with the intimation that Douglass' change of heart on the constitutional question was almost the sell-out, for the sake of a rich philanthropist's support, that Garrison said it was. He will shudder at Fuller's story of the non-existent love affair between Douglass and a British white woman (to which Fuller could answer that Douglass did, indeed, take a white woman for his second wife some thirty years after the book's fictional romance). But those would be academic quibbles. Students who really know Douglass are as rare as orthodox historians who care to touch him. No one who is interested in bringing this great figure into focus could begrudge the historical novelist his right to individual interpretation. There might be, in spots, a more authentic Douglass. It is difficult to imagine one more timely or making for better reading.

The Afro-American

By J. Saunders Redding

(JULE, by George Wylie Henderson, Creative Age Press, 234 p. $250.)

At first "Jule" was very simple and interesting and at least potentially meaningful, although a great deal of it had been said before.

It is hard to find anything new to say about a colored boy's growing up in the South—especially a boy like Jule.

And when there's nothing new to be said it is very hard to make the old things meaningful unless your language is distinguished, or your point of view unusual, or your insight particularly penetrating.

Plowed at Eight

Yet his life makes interesting reading that was considered revealing when Odum was writing "Rainbow Round My Shoulder," and Wallace Thurman was writing "The Blacker The Berry" twenty-five years ago.

"He cut his teeth on a ham hock," this Jule did, "and grew out of babyhood on a diet of corn-meal mush and buttermilk." You see, that's the kind of thing. "And when he was eight years old, little Jule could handle a plow like a man."

He lived with his mother, Ollie Miss, and he went coon and possum hunting, and once he asked about his father, Big Jule, and he ate corn pone, and he worked at plowing and planting and feeding the pigs for old Uncle Alex who told him that "Figgers is figgers. Figgers is natch'l. Figgers don't lie."

"Darn Near Killed"

He didn't need to go to school, because Uncle Alex was always telling him things like that, and so, of course, Jule learned a lot.

He was almost not fast enough in learning that no white man in the South is going to share his girl with a colored boy, even if the girl is colored too. Jule was darn near killed learning that; and then he had to leave the South.

He went to New York, and his life there was interesting too—and extraordinary, but even more meaningless than it had been in the village in Alabama.

It was as meaningless as all distortion of the truth in fiction is meaningless. Jule gets in with an underworld character named Jake Simmons, who gives him entree to doctors, lawyers, teachers and other dicty folk, and Jule makes love to Anne, "a little society b—h," who wants to buy him a new suit.

Lou a Slut

But he falls for Lou, who had graduated from "an eastern finishing school" (So help me!) on her father's day laborer's wages.

Lou is nothing but a slut, and says so. And Jule finds it out. It drives him nuts. It makes him go to school two nights a week at the YMCA. It makes him want to be a printer.

Then, just as he gets his apprenticeship papers, his mother dies back home and he goes down to bury her. He sees his old girl again—the one the white man didn't want to share.

Nothing to Say

"Write me a card, Jule," she says. "I want to know where you are."

"You're going with me," Jule said, just like that. He had learned to talk without apostrophes and double negatives at the YMCA. It's a mystery where the girl had learned. "I'm taking you with me," Jule said. "Be ready in the morning.' (He didn't say "mawning" anymore either.)

"I'll be ready, Jule! I'll be ready in the morning."

And I presume she was.

When I read the same author's "Ollie Miss" ten years ago, I wished that when he came to write his next book he'd have something to say. Now, after reading "Jule," I'm still wishing.

The Evolution of Jule

The Times Book Review

JULE. By George Wylie Henderson. 234 pp. New York: Creative Age Press. $2.50.

By HUBERT CREEKMORE

TO the large volume of literature by and about Negroes, George Wylie Henderson has added a few rather unfamiliar features. Most striking is the fact that his Negro hero, Jule, seems impervious to any anxieties or pressures of his race. The others—a caustic picture of Harlem's well-to-do, Jule's two close friendships with white men and a Negro farmer who keeps tenants—are not quite so novel.

Jule's mother was the subject of Mr. Henderson's earlier novel, "Ollie Miss." She brings up her son in Alabama with the idea that he's "got to be somebody." Jule learned to figure sums, to hunt, to farm and to love Bertha Mae, who worked in the home of his white boss, Boykin Keye. One day Jule got in a fight with Keye and had to run away—to New York, where he found work—dishwasher, bus boy, then waiter—found friends and women who liked him, including a college girl through whom he meets a second white friend, who battles to get him a union card so he can become a printer. After celebrating his union membership, Jule learns that his mother is dead, returns to Alabama and plans to bring Bertha Mae back to New York.

Mr. Henderson never goes into the thoughts, impulses, emotions—in short, the workings— of his characters, except to suggest them in their speeches. You can believe their actions are true and logical, but you can't care very much because there are no evident desires, ambitions, conflicts, suspicions or anything below the surface. You just don't warm up to people without some understanding and sympathy.

It's no use saying that Jule is trying to live up to his mother's advice to "be somebody" when everything that advances him is accidental or offered. Except for the women who can see his handsome face and his rippling muscles, it is difficult to say why people like Jule—and, especially, why his friendships burst immediately into full flower. For Jule's unconcern with everything is overwhelming. He seems to be an abject, unimaginative fatalist. "Singin' is singin'," is his answer to whether he likes singing.

For telling his story Mr. Henderson has used a kind of writing that can best be called a primer style. Almost every sentence is simple, declarative and short. The dialogue is similar and has much the same rhythm and cadence, no matter who speaks, white or Negro. It may have been his intention to project some of the naïveté of Jule in his prose, but the results are often monotony, exasperation and unnecessary explanations. Thus:

She sliced chicken and toasted bread. She spread mayonnaise on toast and made sandwiches. She covered the sandwiches and put them on the card table. She speared olives on toothpicks and put cheese into cubes. She forked up pickles and placed them in a dish. She cut up peppers and lettuce and made a green salad. She put the salad in the icebox. She cut herself a wedge of fruitcake and sat down to wait for Jule.

From such a passage—and there are scores—a reader gets no insight and no pleasure. It's passable in a melodrama where the focus is on acting. But in the story of a Negro's struggle upward in this American world, Mr. Henderson owes it to his characters to give them, by his writing, minds and souls and qualities that will come out of the prose to the reader, touching him with the warmth and reality of people he knew.

Complacence in Dixie

The Times Book Review

QUALITY. By Cid Ricketts Sumner. 286 pp. Indianapolis, Ind.: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. $2.75.

By NASH K. BURGER

MANY a piece of popular fiction has satisfied its readers with an account of a handsome young doctor's love for a soft-voiced, well-scrubbed nurse. But suppose (with the romance nearing its inevitable matrimonial conclusion) it develops that the nurse is a Negro who has been passing as white? What then? Cid Ricketts Sumner gives one answer in her novel, "Quality," which begins where most romantic stories end—just before the wedding.

The wedding never comes off. The last seen of the doctor, an earnest, young man from Boston ("My family has always been interested in the Negroes. I was brought up on stories of abolition days. * * * It's the sort of thing we stand for."), he is hastening down a Mississippi road away from his fiancée. Thus Mrs. Sumner's young man from the North (like Lillian Smith's young man from the South) shies away from miscegenation. Mrs. Sumner and Miss Smith, Southerners and women of discernment, were more concerned with the major problem of white prejudice and injustice than with the lesser, individual question of intermarriage.

In Mrs. Sumner's story an educated, intelligent, part-Negro nurse encounters the peculiar Southern attitudes on race for the first time—and, as would anyone, finds them pretty hard to take. In the course of presenting Pinkey's experiences (climaxed by her efforts to obtain a legacy that is rightfully hers) Mrs. Sumner covers a good many aspects of Negro-white relations in a small Southern town—from a Negro's difficulty in finding a place to buy an ice-cream soda to a Negro's difficulty in obtaining justice. Not all the whites in Mrs. Sumner's book are evil, not all the Negroes innocent of guile and wrong-doing. She knows her people better than that. And Pinkey, with such help from the whites as she can get and through her own spirit and good sense, works out a solution that will satisfy and interest most readers.

"Quality" conforms generally to the requisites of women's magazine fiction: including some fussiness in style, melodrama, typed characters (hard to avoid in fiction about the South), the emotional world of a schoolgirl's dream. But the community and personal life of white and Negro is truly drawn. These aspects of the novel will cause some readers to marvel, and make many a

Young Author to Issue New Book of Poems

NEW YORK—(ANP)—Due for publication on Nov. 15 is a book of a people not yet free. The title poem, "Freedom's Soldier," extols the greatness of the colored soldier and shows the important part he has played in world wars.

His poems paint a picture of the aspiration and achievements of 40 poems entitled "Freedom's Soldier," by Ricardo Weeks, 30, a native of Puerta de Tierra, Puerto Rico, who since 1941 has published over 200 poems in newspapers and magazines.

It is the latter group that Mrs. Sumner really is writing about, those satisfied Southerners who feel that only they and God really understand the Negro. It is a reasonably literate, normal group in many ways. But it is unable to realize that a low standard of living for the Southern Negro means a low standard of living for the complacent Southerner squirm.

ADMIRE FIRST NEGRO WOMEN'S MAGAZINE

The St. Louis Argus Fri 4-14-46

Alluring Marva Louis, who is never caught napping when something new is being added, arrived in town just in time to agree with attractive Ivy Madden that the new ALLURE Magazine for women of color, debuting May 1, will be the talk of the season. However, because of the shortage of paper, not many newsstand copies will be available. But Marva and Ivy aren't taking any chances. They're buying advance subscriptions to be sure they get their copy of ALLURE. "We can't afford to be without it" they say. Sun 4-14-46

Calvin's News Service

MIRACLE: NO SEX

Dead Girl, Press Agent, Priest in Best Seller

The Constitution Atlanta, Ga. Sun. 9-22-46

"THE MIRACLE OF THE BELLS," by Russell Janney. Prentice-Hall. 497 pp. $3.

Not since as a youngster we dodged parents to investigate the intrigues of Tarzan of the Apes have we read a more engrossing and an appealing novel than this.

"The Miracle of the Bells" is no fiction belonging in the category of Edgar Rice Burrough's thrillers. It is thrilling, in a meanful and purposeful way. And it is constructed with simplicity, written in an easy free style that makes for enjoyable, not-to-be-put-down-until-finished reading.

Mr. Janney, with deep understanding which has developed and grown in his 61 years largely devoted to newspapering, has in his first novel drawn characters finely, and has knit their lives into patterns easily distinguishable as characteristics in the types he so purposefully, meanfully and successfully finesses to the reader's mind.

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The townfolks he meets are grasping, money motivated. Even the priests. That is all save one, a newcomer, priest of the little run-down church from which the girl wished to be buried. Priest and press agent meet on a common level. The agent, now down and out, his job gone because of his insistance on the right of the dead girl to have her work of life, the motion picture, released.

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Christians, Jews To Hear Janney

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Minor Declares Lynching Attempt Is Continuing

Daily World Atlanta, Ga. Thurs. 9-19-46

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That sensational revelation is contained in a booklet now being published by Robert Minor here and shows that at least two law enforcement officers have been involved in lynchings. A further astonishing disclosure is that Judge Elmer D. Davies, the federal judge who has repeatedly ruled against the efforts of NAACP defense lawyers to obtain a fair trial for the 25 defendants, is a former klansman.

CORONER LISTED

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Another lyncher is Bert Erwin, Maury county coroner, said Minor. He was one of those who 13 years ago held the arms of the Negro boy while the ghastly mutilation of his body was performed then pulled in the slack of the rope and tied it to the tree and pushed the boy off a ladder to hang.

The trial to [illegible] the 25 Negroes

CONSPIRED IN BAIL

Minor recounts how Denton conspired to raise the bail of the 70 Negroes arrested after the ruthless destruction of "Mink Slide" by whole families and the murders by small gangs within a year period. The stories are not written, Minor said, but are words of eyewitnesses accounts that have been checked with authoritatives and taken down in short-hand.

Haitian Boccaccio

Times Book Review

THE BEAST OF THE HAITIAN HILLS. By Philippe Thoby-Marcelin and Pierre Marcelin. 210 pp. New York: Rinehart & Co. $2.50.

By ARNA BONTEMPS

Negro Author

Black Life in Haiti as told by a talented pair of Haitian writers won the Latin-American Prize Novel hangings of the Competition with "Canapé-Vert," a little many mur-within a 25-a poetically conceived account of stories are not peasant life on the outskirts of but are words Port au Prince. Their book was counts that have well noticed and won them criti-authoritatives cal esteem in the United States.

BURNINGS AT STAKE

His booklet, being published by New Century publishers, tells about burnings at stake, hangings and the mur-whole families and the ma-ders by small gangs within a year period. The stories written, Minor said, but are of eyewitnesses accounts that have been checked with authoritatives and taken down in short-hand.

They have now followed it with another short novel set in the same milieu. Like its predecessor, this new story is a genuine exotic, with the same quality of wide-eyed, rustic enchantment. Perhaps its thesis is suggested by an old Creole saying: "A fish lives in the water. If one should tell you that the crocodile is sick, believe him." Certainly the fall of Morin Duttileul, protagonist of these strange and bloody happenings, can be traced to his failure to recognize the wisdom of such counsel. Sun. 11-24-46

A well-to-do grocer of Port au

9 1946

ADMIRE FIRST NEGRO WOMEN'S MAGAZINE

The St. Louis Argus Fri 4-14-46

Missouri

Alluring Marva Louis, who is never caught napping when something new is being added, arrived in town just in time to agree with attractive Ivy Madden that the new ALLURE Magazine for women of color, debuting May 1, will be the talk of the season. However, because of the shortage of paper, not many newsstand copies will be available. But Marva and Ivy aren't taking any chances. They're buying advance subscriptions to be sure they get their copy of ALLURE. "We can't afford to be without it" they say. Sun 4-14-46

Calvin's News Service

MIRACLE: NO SEX

Dead Girl, Press Agent, Priest in Best Seller

The Constitution Atlanta, Ga. Sun. 9-22-46

"THE MIRACLE OF THE BELLS," by Russell Janney. Prentice-Hall. 497 pp. $3.

Not since as a youngster we dodged parents to investigate the intrigues of Tarzan of the Apes have we read a more engrossing and an appealing novel than this.

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Sun. 11-24-46

Haitian Boccaccio

The Times Book Review

By Philippe Thoby-Marcelin and Pierre Marcelin. 210 pp. New York: Rinehart & Co. $2.50.

By ARNY BONJEMPS

Back in 1941 this talented pair of Haitian writers won the Latin-American Prize Novel Competition with "Canapé-Vert," a 25-a poetically conceived account of peasant life on the outskirts of Port au Prince. Their book was published by words that have counts that have cal esteem in the United States. down in short- They have now followed it with another short novel set in the

Prince, Morin dreamed of a place in the country; a mulatto and a member of the ruling élite, he yearned for the leafy pleasures and Dionysian frolics of a planter on his own land. Almost before he knew it, he had his wish. His next business, of course, was to establish himself as master of his grounds. This led to conflicts which involved the gods of the hills and groves, the childlike faith of his neighbors in these voodoo deities, their horror when he felled the sacred tree beside his spring. It is this sophisticated man's attempt to meet his new problems armed only with the wisdom and experience of his more cultivated background that gives the Marcelins material for their strangely fascinating tale.

That he comes out second best in the struggle can be taken for granted. What he encounters along the way, however, is more than any American reader could possibly be expected to guess; for his enemies are resentful peasants, his own flabby character and, worst of all, the "thing" called the Cigouave. The incident of the black butterfly was only one of the forewarnings of dangers ahead.

The novel itself is something like an anecdote or a tall tale—part fable, part Haitian Boccaccio. Despite some grim doings, despite the elaborate voodoo rituals, the pattern does not impede the naturalistic tempo. The skill, grace, and spice of the storytelling are art from a distant and neglected world. The book abounds in native proverbs like "The pig knows against which tree he can scratch himself" and "When a woman does her duty as a wife, she no longer has friends" and "A good cock sings in all the chicken coops." It is rich in folk sayings and traditional wisdom; the descriptive passages are short, neat and unforgettable.

Grandiose Forgetting Of Things Past

The Worker New York, N.Y.

Sun. 7-14-4

FOXES OF HARROW by Frank Yerby. Dial Press. $3.00.

Reviewed by

JOHN HUDSON JONES

THE only literary importance to this period potboiler is that its author is a Negro, and as such signalizes a dangerous trend that today's Negro writers should avoid. It is done in a lush and sensational style that rivals **Forever Amber** for blood and thunder—action in the bedroom technique.

Stephen Fox, an Irish adventurer, arrives in New Orleans in 1825 with a $10 goldpiece and a huge pearl. Being a clever gambler with an old world grand manner, he immediately begins piling up a fortune with which he founds "Harrow," his palatial estate.

The main thread of the story deals with Fox' struggle to become a rich and powerful man and to be accepted by the New Orleans aristocracy. Around it, though, Yerby has skillfully woven many plots and sub-plots. There is his friendship with Mike Farrell, the blasphemous old flat-boat captain who faces life and always has a "bed and board" at Harrow. Caleen, the old voodoo woman who constantly tells Inch, the slave-boy, to read and be ready to fight for his freedom. There is also Etienne, the younger Fox, who inherits all his father's wildness. There are murders, arson and voodoo dances. There are drownings, terrible storms, and two fever epidemics that kill nearly every one in New Orleans. The Mexican and Civil Wars are thrown in for good measure.

Undoubtedly Yerby is a skilled craftsman. He has succeeded in recreating the surface atmosphere of the period with what must have been a painstaking research job. He has handled many characters in a complex variety of situations without getting bogged down. From beginning to end, the story maintains a cohesive quality and a level of communication that consistently holds reader interest.

This excellent technical skill in telling a story, however, has been blighted by the content he chose to delineate. The years 1825-65 were one of the most revolutionary and dramatic periods in American history. The slave issue was girding the nation for a civil war. The Kansas Nebraska Bill—54-40 or Fight—and Texas—Slave or Free? — were inflaming the minds of every single American. In Louisiana, the Creoles who considered themselves neither white nor black, were slowly but surely being driven from power by the whites.

Slave revolts were occurring with regular frequency. In February, 1829 the United States Secretary of War found it necessary to write to the United States Army Commanding Officer at New Orleans, a Colonel Clinch, to hold himself ready to aid the governor of Louisiana "on account of the insurrectionary spirit manifested by the black population of that state."

Louisiana, from 1825 through the Civil War, had a constant recurring of these slave revolts. In fact, Herbert Aptheker's "Negro Slave Revolts in the United States," indicates that known revolts came at about one year intervals in this period. The New **Orleans Daily Picayune** for December 18, 1856 commented "There is a spirit of turbulence abroad in various quarters."

Undoubtedly every phase of human experience in Louisiana at that time was touched and seriously affected by the growing militancy of the slaves and by the day to day controversy raging over slavery as an institution.

But Yerby has chosen to show the period through the medium of a few slave-owning aristocrats who emerge in the end as defeated but unconquerable rebels. The relation of his aristocrats to the slaves, poor whites, and free Negroes is drawn with a contemptuous one-sided approach. Here there is nothing even critical of slavery. A few of the slave characters say they would like to have their freedom, and Inch actually escapes, but in terms of the burning emotions that the slaves of that time were certainly manifesting, Yerby has chosen to either forget or to ignore it. Only in Inch is there any slight attempt to create a strong slave-character, but he ends a completely ludicrous and unrealized character as the swaggering New Orleans Chief of Police.

The Negro writer has an immense responsibility today. He must be in the vanguard of his people's struggle and he can do this effectively only by perfecting his craft and by attacking those concepts and institutions which led to and continue to maintain the various forms of Negro oppression. Is it not the responsibility of all writers to honestly portray life in all its complexities and to show social cause and effect? Didn't Yerby know that the people he glorified later produced the Black Codes, the Ku Klux Klan, the Grandfather Clauses, the white primaries, and the lynch law of the South? These things are not laughing matters, they are matters of life and death right now, today. If Yerby was just telling a story to make the money, that's fine, but not at the expense of the Negro people and their struggle for freedom. It is to be hoped that in his next book he will employ his fine story-telling technique on some really solid and healthy material.

Of Man's Best Friend

Times Book Review

DUMB-BELL AND OTHERS. By John Taintor Foote. 309 pp. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. $3.

By JAMES STREET

New York, N.Y.

IF you appreciate dogs that run "like comets," knightly sportsmen and wind whistling through frosty stubble (and cold feet a[illegible] Negro who later swaps him aching backs) then you will enjoy this book despite the author's unnecessary introduction. Here a fine setter's discipline, perhaps mislabeled affection, is imposed upon to the extent that, in heeding his master's voice, the dog forsakes a romp with a current lady-friend to be about his duty of hunting birds. Maybe so, and maybe a dog is man's best friend, but a man is not always a dog's best friend.

Sun. 10-20-

John Taintor Foote knows dogs and field trials. He also knows movie writing. He reports that after six years of movie writing he is timid about putting his thoughts on paper unassisted by technicolor. Mr. Foote need not worry, for all the props are in his book. However, some of us enjoy dog stories enough to overlook props, slick wordage, gooey nonsense and such expressions as "His [a dog's] eyes were pools of liquid amber."

10-20-46

The best story in this collection is "Dog Upon the Waters," a delicate, lovely little tale about Myrtle. This story is delightful not because a Georgia cracker (his "old woman" looked 16) sold his best friend for a mere $40, but because the new owner possibly learned a lesson in humility. At least, he proved to the dog's satisfaction that he was worthy of owning a gentleman's friend. Don't hold it against the cracker because he sold his dog. Could be that he needed the dough.

"Pocono Shot" is a good, sound story and rings as true as the twenty-gauge gun that Mr. Foote uses so well.

However, the featured story, "Dumb-Bell of Brookfield," made me yearn to turn H. Allen Smith's Rhubarb, the dog-eating cat, aloose on half the canines of the world and all their owners. This tale concerns a doggy establishment with big house, rose gardens and a collection of stilted dog idolators, including the "master of Brookfield" and the "mistress of Brookfield," sometimes called "Chief." Then there is a "head kennel man" named Peter and a dog named Dumb-Bell, the runt of the litter, born with a silver bone in his mouth.

Of course, Dumb-Bell does great things and proves himself. Once, despite a touch of ptomaine, he bests a bad man's dog and the "mistress of Brookfield" sends $1,000 to the S. P. C. A. I know some dog-men who do not like the S. P. C. A. and who might think it a bit cruel to run a sick dog.

Dumb-Bell also gets lost in Tennessee, is found and trained

Saturday Sat. 11-23-46

Miss Florence Murray, the editor, who prepared the book under a Rosenwald Fellowship in Journalism, was born in Alexandria, Va., the daughter of F. H. Murray, well-known writer and scholar. She was educated at Howard, Chicago and Columbia Universities.

Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK The 1946 Negro Handbook, edited by Miss Florence Murray and scheduled for publication next month, is the third edition of a widely recognized world almanac on current facts and figures on the activities of Negroes in the Grand National. Then there are chapters on the Brookfield cortege takes the dog away from the Tennessean without so much as a howdy-do. Again, maybe so, but when rich sportsmen begin taking champions away from 80-year-old Tennesseans who traded the dog off'n a Negro, then twenty-gauge guns are not big enough. A couple of 105's would be better. Southerners

The African-American

1946 Handbook to Be Issued in December

The book contains a complete factual summary of the GI's role in World War II, up-to-date information on population, business, labor, farming, health, religion, government, politics, sports, theatre and

9 1946

A Dakota Negro's Story

New York Times, N.Y.
4-28-46

AMERICAN DAUGHTER. By Era Bell Thompson. 301 pp. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. $3.

By E. B. GARSIDE

A FARMER in North Dakota has plenty of weather to cope with. Cold means 46 below; hot, 115 above. Drought may hang on for years. Squalls of snow blot out the September moon. The wind tears strong men's whiskers out by the roots, and would do the same to trees, but there are none.

So brisk a climate, you might think, would hold small attraction for a Virginia-born colored man, particularly if this colored man had always cooked for a living in warm kitchens. Yet so it did, and that is why Miss Thompson has a tale to tell. Her father, Pop Thompson, moved north to the wheat country from Des Moines in the years prior to World War I.

Miss Thompson's story of her life is largely devoted to the North Dakota period, but runs on sketchily into the years away from home at college and finally at work in the city. For a short while the Thompsons lived precariously as tenant-farmers. Inflated flax prices in World War I suddenly brought them into the clear, and Pop wisely quit the soil. Thereafter Era Bell grew up in Bismarck and Mandan.

Even in this town life Miss Thompson moved much more among white people than among her own, for the good reason that there was only a handful of Negroes in the entire State. Consequently her early experiences of discrimination were mild. The rural immigrant population was not as yet committed to the American habit of color prejudice.

IN this respect Miss Thompson's autobiography has a definite psychological interest. It simply proves once again that the plastic age is critical for the psyche, and leaves on it a permanent stamp. Occasionally some bumpkin would shout "nigger" in her face. A trip to Fargo as member of a high school track team was marred by the familiar restaurant difficulties. But not once was she struck hard by organized malice, since it did not exist.

One result of this early background is that Miss Thompson thinks much more in the vein of a white person attached to pioneer origins than like a Negro absorbed in the struggle for equality. Her candor has a brashly rural quality, the rhythms of her dialogue are white, her disinterest in the deeper motives of human behavior might be duplicated by any farm girl used to an active, outdoor life. Unlike so many of her race, she is quite often captured by memories of wind, weather and landscape. This trait contrasts sharply with the emancipated Southern Negro's lack of enthusiasm for canebrake and levee scenes.

The turning point in Miss Thompson's career arrived when she became the protégée of the Reverend Riley, a minister who most decidely practiced what he preached. Through Dr. Riley's intervention Miss Thompson was able to complete her interrupted education. He brought her directly into his family, on equal terms. When he was called to the presidency of Dawn College, a sectarian institution in Iowa, she went along. After graduation she survived a WPA phase in Chicago, and is now an interviewer with the United States Employment Service.

THE good, strong face looking out from the dust-jacket of the book discourages any harsh criticism of Miss Thompson's work. Miss Thompson, anyone can see, is a woman of character, and has fought a good fight. She has tackled a mass of material and organized it into narrative form, and done it with the feeble aid of Dawn technique, hobbled fast to the Dawn mentality. Very gently, then, let it be said that Miss Thompson's writing is imitative, her model a fraud.

For she patterns her style on the slick stuff written by slick women. Everyone knows this material. Tons of it are printed. Typically these women take gay, mad trips abroad. Unlike anyone else, they have loads of fun in the customs. They meet one charming oddity after another. Sometimes they marry a Balkan boyar and live on great estates given over to the culture of oriental tobaccos. Later they write their books.

Even when directed toward orthodox subject-matter this anecdotal chittering is odious. But as applied to breezy Dakotan rustics, to Bible colleges, WPA agonies, and the like, the mode of gush and gasp is virtually a menace.

It is a genuine pity that Miss Thompson's characters must always "leap up" from their seats and "bounce down" a flight of stairs.

But Miss Thompson's naïveté extends beyond an imitative style. There are pages, as in the account of high jinks at Dawn and a transcontinental bus trip, where it crosses the threshold and becomes bizarre. A one-day excursion overseas, specifically to Vancouver across Puget Sound, overwhelms Miss Thompson. "For a brief day," she says, "I had been away from America, and yet my heart thrilled, my eyes blurred, as I looked out across the water toward my country, my home." That, dear reader, is corn.

4-28-46

IN the Dawn section she tells about midnight, early morning and even "poetry" hikes. On these last the young ladies all lay on their backs, looked skyward and recited couplets to each other. And since coming to Chicago, YWCA activities have taken up Miss Thompson's time. She has attended lectures and concerts and courses. She has communed with turbaned Hindus at the International House.

And yet it is hard to believe, remembering the face on the dust-jacket, that Miss Thompson intends to spend the rest of her days collecting intellectual knick-knacks. She must have seen much she does not tell, and felt far more. All that will come forth, perhaps, in her next book.

Rogers Writes New History

The Courier
Pittsburgh, Pa.
9-19-46

NEW YORK—The achievements of Negroes and their contribution to world civilization from the days of Ancient Egypt down to our times are told in a new book by J. A. Rogers, author of "From Superman To Man," "Sex and Race," and other books on Negro history. This new book is entitled, "World's Great Men of Color, 3000 B. C. to 1946 A. D."

Included are 200 short biographies of from 1500 to 6000 words of great Negroes of Africa, Europe, Asia, the United States, the British West Indies, and South and Central America. There are true stories of great Egyptian rulers and messiahs; Islami conquerors, even though such an appeal to writers, poets and rulers who conquered Spain and gave it the finest culture it ever had; and the exploits of Hannibal of Carthage whose military tactics are still taught in the leading military academies; of Terence, greatest of all the Latin stylists and playwrights, and the Queen of Sheba and Solomon.

Apparently Mr. Logan has been nettled by the school of pseudo-anthropologists who have reduced color to selection alone; and who, to support their claims for American conditions, have argued that Negro men, generally, prefer white or near-white wives. In addition, Mr. Logan might be trying to show that there is a rumble of rebellion in the ranks of darker Negroes against near-white and lily-white dominance of ice cream parlor on the main street of my town. I was the proudest boy in town that day; that is, until the counter girl came up and said, 'We can't serve you here!'"

No matter what its confusion of standards, its revelation of some color prejudice against lighter-skinned Negroes and even though such an appeal to whites, Mr. Logan's book is an excellent study of the mind of the average Negro who has reached the common level of American life. His reflections are those of a Negro "Rotarian," of the good mixer, the man of position, and the man of deep feelings and sentiments are rooted in the original sin on the part of the white world against a sensitive person. Denied a college education by a bank failure, the author, nevertheless, came to operate not one, but several ice cream parlors and was graduated from high school. On entering the struggle for wages and service to him and his mother. But three years in the Army gave him time to reflect, and No matter what he writes of perhaps brood, over race preju-

The American Negro

Sunday Times

A NEGRO'S FAITH IN AMERICA. By Spencer Logan. 88 pp. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

By GEORGE STREATOR

THE first two sentences of forhang together. The chapters offer approaches to the ated from the ing the struggle for wages and service to him and his mother. the status of the merican life—and re- for a business site, he saw the But three years in the Army e of confusion in the world of equal opportunity wane. gave him time to reflect, and

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Logan's book of essays, a non-main theme—the fiction winner in the Macmillan Negro in Americ

Fighting Prejudice With Books

By ELIZABETH M. BACON

Free Lance

IT IS a matter of the gravest concern to us when we see our children exposed to the poison of anti-Negro prejudice (and white chauvinism. This is a serious problem in many families today, especially in communities where feelings runs high among the adults. In my experience it is not enough simply to tell children that race prejudice is wrong. The children must develop their own weapon against racist propaganda. Race prejudice is based on lies; therefore, by giving children a solid foundation of truth, we are helping to arm them against the whole concept of discrimination.

The right kind of books can do a lot in this direction. This week, and for coming weeks as space permits, I am going to list some books for children of various ages which, in my opinion, deal constructively with this question. (If you would like a complete list immediately, you can write to either the Harlem Branch, New York Public Library, 103 West 135 St., New York City, or the Bureau for Intercultural Education, 119 West 57 St., New York City.)

Since the need is perhaps greatest and the books hardest to find in the middle age group (8-11), I'll begin with these.

MELINDY'S MEDAL by George Faulkner and John Becker. Julian Messner $2.00.

Melindy is a little Negro girl who lives in a housing project and has her problems in school. She has her problems at home too, because she comes of a long line of medal-winning heroes—but what can a little girl do to win a medal? How she manages to do so forms the plot of a warm story.

KEY CORNERS by Eva Knox Evans. Illustrated by Erick Berry. Coward-McCann. $2.00

Equally warm and sympathetic is this story of the efforts of a group of Negro children in an underprivileged rural area in the deep South to get an education. The Key Corners bunch are as engaging a gang of kids as any in fiction, and their story is both authentic and exciting.

CALL ME CHARLIE by Jesse Jackson. Illustrated by Doris Spiegel. Harper. $2.00.

This book is unique, because it is the only book for this age group that presents the question of ra- Henry Stalhut. Knopf. $2.50.

Each different people in America has its past and pride in the traditions of that past. There is a conscious campaign on the part of the white chauvinists to obliterate the Negro's African past or to point to it as somehow degraded. Here is a collection of South Afri- can folk tales, beautifully told by the well-known folk singer that gives the lie to the chauvinists. cial discrimination with no punches pulled. Charlie is a Negro boy who moves into a white district in a Middle Western city and goes to the white junior high school. The effect of the school and the neighborhood on Charley and Charley's effect on them, form the basis of a really splendid contemporary story.

KOOS THE HOTTENTOT by Josef Marais. Illustrated by

Centenary Awards Contest for veal a degree of

members of the Armed Forces, author's mind:

dice, and he sought to work out a formula for the American Negro who wanted to be an American.

"A Negro's Faith in America" is neither a song of praise for Negro progress nor an apology for the Negro's existence as a human being. To the author, "tolerance follows understanding," and he feels that "intolerance on the part of too large a proportion of white Americans is matched by an attitude on the part of many Negroes which is equally censurable, and just as dangerous to the cause of better race relations." The solution, he insists, will come when "the color of a man's skin is of no more importance than the color of his eyes."

New, Refreshing, Well-Written

"American Daughter"

By ARTHUR P. DAVIS

AMERICAN DAUGHTER, by Era Bell Thompson, 301 pp., University of Chicago Press, 1946.

Here is an autobiography that does not deal with the distorting effects of the American race problem; that does not mention the oppression, the violence, and the depravity which segregated living produces.

Here is a story of childhood and youth with a setting in North Dakota. Here is a life of a girl who, for a while at least, lived, thought, and acted like any other American.

In short, here is a new and fresh book about colored American life—one that we need if we are to see the complete picture.

Pioneer Family

"American Daughter" depicts the sorrows, the joys, and the struggles of an interesting pioneer family. Pop Thompson, with his three sons, Tom, Dick, and Harry; his wife, and Era Bell, his daughter, moved from Des Moines, Io., to a farm in the heart of the Dakota prairie land.

A better chef than farmer, Pop struggled with the soil, achieving only partial success. But neither hardship nor loss nor failure could quench his spirit.

The supreme character in the work, Pop has a native dignity and a great friendliness that won the respect of all who knew him. He will also win the respect of the reader. In this portrait of her father, Era Bell Thompson has embodied all of the love and respect that she had for this grand person.

Thesis of Book

The neighbors of this family were of varied national backgrounds, but they had the same problems, the same human kindness and friendliness. Although Miss Thompson does not label it as such, this is the unconscious thesis of the book and the secret of the work's fascination.

"American Daughter" is an optimistic book—a book in some respects like the works of Louis Adamic. Miss Thompson, like Adamic, sees many of the obstacles to unity in our American life, but she also sees the other side of the medal, and she emphasizes the latter.

One feels that she has had many more skirmishes with the problem than she tells about in her work. But she set out to give a picture not of humiliation and oppression but of the essential goodness which can be found in American living.

Two Attitudes

The book is therefore like a breath of fresh air after the noisome atmosphere we have experienced in some recent autobiographies and novels. It naturally invites comparison with Wright's "Black Boy." In fact, it is a sort of unintentional answer to the latter work.

"Black Boy" is morbidly cynical and pessimistic; "American Daughter" is just as definitely hopeful and optimistic.

We need both attitudes. Both are therapeutic. Wright points out the obstacles to be met. Thompson gives us the hope that they can be overcome. She bolsters our faith in the American way. Although we have never wholly lost that faith, we do need an occasional shot in the army to help us keep it alive. "American Daughter" gives us that kind of lift.

A Friendly Soul

Era Bell Thompson is a friendly soul. It is obvious on every page and in every act of her life. Talking of the people she meets in her present position. Miss Thompson

remarks:

"Cranks, philanthropists, or plain everyday Americans, I like them all. For every bad one, there are 20 good ones. . . . It is surprising to know how many people there are in the world hungry for kindness, to have someone believe in them. And I do believe in them."

In spite of this emphasis on good will, Miss Thompson does not go too far with it. She does not become a hat-in-hand apologist. Perhaps her Northern background has made it possible, but she has written a "goodwill' book that does not make the reader sick. And that is no mean achievement.

Well-written, new, fresh and charming, "American Daughter" brings us another promising writer. Let us hope that Miss Thompson's second volume will come soon and, more important, that it will live up to the promise in this excellent first. She has made a grand start.

Phi Beta Kappa

THE HISTORY OF PHI BETA KAPPA By Oscar M. Voorhees. 373 pp. New York: Crown Publishers. $4.

THE oldest and most famous of Greek letter societies in America was founded by a handful of men at William and Mary College in 1776. Today there are 141 chapters and more than 94,000 members. The expansion and development of the society has been told here in great detail by its official historian, Dr. Voorhees. In spite of glimpses of campus life in post-Revolutionary America and some interesting accounts of the varying fortunes of the earlier branches, the chronicle will probably have its greatest appeal to the society's membership and the professional historian.

THOMAS LASK.

Revaluing Waugh's "Black Mischief"

BLACK MISCHIEF. By Evelyn Waugh. 312 pp. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. $2.50.

By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"BLACK MISCHIEF" was first published in 1932. That was fifteen years after the appearance of Norman Douglas' "South Wind" and nine years after Aldous Huxley's "Antic Hay." Obviously, then, the degeneracy of the English upper-class was no new discovery and neither was the profitable art of describing naughtiness. Mr. Waugh just escaped being behind the times when this particular book made its debut, and to-day the issue it now is to invite a sober judgment. It is no longer even relatively novel, and it is no longer shocking. The only question which remains is the question: "Has it wit enough to keep it sweet?"

The story begins in Azania, a mythical island off the east coast of North Africa, where the Oxford-trained son of the old Emperor has just managed to proclaim himself ruler of a motley population in which the vices of the Arab, the European adventurer and the black savage are all nicely mixed. It then shifts to England, deals sketchily with the bored, sexual misconduct of a smart group and centers our attention upon a young incompetent. This character casually betakes himself to Azania, where he becomes the confidential adviser to the Emperor.

Between them they plan to modernize the country in accord with a program built around the popularization of contraception—which, by the way, Mr. Bernard Shaw had called the greatest modern invention before Mr. Waugh was born. Unfortunately most of the natives mistake the meaning of the posters intended to picture the contrast between a household with too many children and a household with few and assume that the devices recommended will assure them the numerous progeny they consider desirable. No less unfortunately, however, the Christian religious leaders do understand what is up, and when the great Pageant of Contraception finally gets under way, a revolution breaks out. The Emperor is poisoned, one at least of the white women gets eaten, and the British Empire moves in to take over the country.

In all this the author is obviously indebted not only to Huxley and to Douglas but even, in the passages devoted to smart talk, to Noel Coward, and it is not easy to see what he has added of his own. One would, to be sure, hardly mistake "Black Mischief" for the work of any of his predecessors, but the distinguishing characteristic is something left out, not something put in. Norman Douglas is serenely wicked. Depravity, of certain sorts at least, he frankly enjoys with an untroubled conscience, and if he were to be asked the question propounded in a recent TIMES cartoon about a different writer, "Hasn't he any *nice* friends?" he would undoubtedly respond that he doesn't want any. In Huxley, on the other hand, a puritan hatred of the flesh was from the very beginning evident just below the surface of novels which evidently shocked the writer both more and less agreeably than they shocked their readers.

IN "Black Mischief" Mr. Waugh seems neither capable of the Douglas serenity nor quite willing to assume Huxley's moral responsibility. In "South Wind," moreover, one encounters everywhere a classically decorous prose which continuously mocks the extravagant matter; in "Antic Hay" Huxley exploits with fine effect his knowledge of the grotesque byways of modern biology. Mr. Waugh, on the other hand, has no stylistic trade-mark unmistakably his own and no knowledge other than that which can be picked up from the smart set. Beside Mr. Douglas his sophistication seems rather adolescent; beside Mr. Huxley his knowledge seems rather thin.

THE jacket of the present reprint quotes a reviewer who compared the work to "Candide," but the comparison is not especially happy. In the first place, "Candide" has a definite thesis while "Black Mischief" betrays everywhere the essential aimlessness of a writer not yet quite sure whether he is excoriating the smart depravity of his characters or delightedly demonstrating that he can go them one better. In the second place, "Candide" does not pretend to be a picture of manners; and being, as it is, very nearly an allegory, it never permits the reader to raise the question whether or not any actual people ever behaved in just this way. But "Black Mischief" does seem to offer itself as a picture of manners and, like Mr. Huxley's early novels, merely turns into lewd farce as it grows more extravagant. We know that it seem very satisfying to him seemed to its earlier readers then no longer seems very satisfying last word in something or other, to readers either. Saints often but we are no longer quite sure begin as sinners, but they do not what the point once was, and it usually advise others to take the same road.

Frederick Douglass' Life to Be Published

NEW YORK—(ANP)—Bearing the title "A Star Pointed North," the life of Frederick Douglass, as written by Edmund Fuller, white, will be published by Harper Brothers, Oct. 30, it was announced here last week by the book publishing firm.

The novel was written with the hope that this book may help to make him familiar to many Americans who are just beginning to realize how many great men the colored people have given to our country." After reading of Douglass's rise from slavery to leadership of his people in the fight for freedom in a battered old book which had been picked up in a second-hand bookstore, the author said he became determined to write a novel about Douglass.

African Analogue

Of Uncle Remus

THERE is an attractively illustrated little book of folk stories of the Baganda people of East Africa. Written for children, these stories have more than passing value for the student of cultural anthropology. For example, the title story, "Wakaima and the Clay Man" is conjecture that in some remote village on the northwest coast of Africa there was a perfect analogue of the American Negro story of the Tar Baby. Lake Victoria these stories which can be picked up from the smart set. Beside Mr. Douglas his sophistication seems rather adolescent; beside Mr. Huxley his knowledge seems rather thin.

WAKAIMA AND THE CLAY MAN, by E. Balintuma Kaliba. New York: Longmans Green; 143 pp.; $2.00.

Wakaima, the hero of many of the stories, is the Baganda prototype of Br'er Rabbit.

We are told by the author that these stories are as old as the Baganda tribe itself. Although people of this land no one knows who first told them, each child between the ages of 5 and 15 learns as later became the rich folklore of American children were originally told by some Uncle Remus.—D. M. W.

'Black Metropolis' Wins Anisfield Prize

"Black Metropolis" by Horace R. Cayton and St. Clair Drake has won the Anisfield Award of $2,500.00 jointly with "One Nation," by Wallace Stegner for the best book of the year on race relations.

This much coveted award sets the stamp of "having arrived" on a book of this nature. The award last year went to "New World A-Comin'" by Roi Ottley.

SHIRLEY GRAHAM, author and composer, has just been awarded the $6,500 Julian Messner Award for the "best book combatting intolerance in America." Five thousand dollars is the outright prize, plus $1,500 advance against royalties for her latest book to be published next spring, "There Was Once a Slave: the Heroic Story of Frederick Douglass." At the same time, Miss Graham revealed that she had signed last week for her recent book, "Paul Robeson, Citizen of the World," to be published in Norway.

Book on Frederick Douglass Wins $6,500 Award

The Julian Messner Award of $6,500 ($5,000 outright and $1,500 against royalties) for the Best Book Combating Intolerance in America has been won by Shirley Graham, whose book, **There Was Once a Slave: The Heroic Story of Frederick Douglass**, was selected from over six hundred manuscripts submitted to the Contest.

The judges for the Contest were Carl Van Doren, Lewis Gannett, and Clifton Fadiman.

Shirley Graham was born in Evansville, Indiana, November 11, 1907 in the home of her great-grandfather who, having been freed from slavery by his owner, bought the Evansville farm before the Civil War. The farmhouse subsequently became a station in the underground railway during the War for slaves escaping into Canada. Frederick Douglass was a frequent visitor and Miss Graham's father used to recall that he once had with him the sword of Toussaint L'Ouverture and that he had once been permitted to hold the sword of the great Haitian liberator.

Miss Graham has been working on the life of Douglass for almost two years and it is the first comprehensive biography dealing with the entire period of Douglass' career. Miss Graham had the advantage of meeting people who knew and worked with Douglass' wife, Helen Pitts.

Miss Graham is a graduate of Oberlin College where she took her Masters degree. She studied at both the Sorbonne and Yale School of Drama for two years. She supervised and directed the Chicago Federal Theatre Unit that brought the

SHIRLEY GRAHAM

Julian Messner, Inc. will publish **There Was Once a Slave: The Heroic Story of Frederick Douglass,** in the late spring of 1947.

9 1946

Color Blind

2 Divergent Views Of the Race Problem

The Courier-Journal
Louisville, Ky.
Sun. 10-13-46

Reviews by Charles W. Morris

COLOR BLIND: By Margaret Halsey. 163 pp. Simon & Schuster. $2.50.

GLASS HOUSE OF PREJUDICE: By Dorothy W. Baruch. 205 pp. William Morrow. $2.50.

One of the significant portents of our collective maturity is the growing interest in and concern over the question of discrimination. Inequalities which have formerly been accepted as a matter of course now find echoes in the press, the public forum and the halls of Congress. No solution has been found for the troubles and problems presented by racial and religious intolerance, but it is no longer possible for the thoughtful American to dismiss these from his thinking.

Two women approach the race problem by widely divergent paths. Margaret Halsey, native New Yorker, generally known as the witty author of "With Malice Toward Some," handles her provocative thesis with the light, the epigrammatic touch; Dr. Baruch, lecturer, scholar and psychologist, delves into the subconscious in her analysis of a growing problem. "Color Blind" is a readable recital of the non-discrimination program of the famous Stage Door Canteen, where 2,500,000 soldiers were entertained by famous actors and resplendent debutantes without regard to the race or color of the clients. Unquestionably, the operation was a success. In spite of a few dissenters, a handful of recalcitrant hostesses and some scattered "incidents," the 4,000 hostesses (most of whom were white women) in New York's famous recreation center talked with Negro servicemen, ate with them and danced with them. There was no violence, no intermarriage, no "coal-black babies." The elegant and beautiful young Caucasians emerged unscathed; the Negro servicemen were afforded added self-respect; and large numbers of men and women of both races appear to have acquired a more tolerant and rational perspective.

Miss Halsey's book, as might be expected, is written in the brilliant and fascinating style which marks her earlier, less serious work. She confesses that she has no background of experience; she does not claim to have devoted what is usually regarded as scientific study to the problem of prejudice. She employs her contacts at the Stage Door Canteen, and the success of her undertaking, as a springboard from which to dive gracefully into the deep and turbulent waters of the race problem. The highly dramatic atmosphere of her sociological clinic, as well as its metropolitan locale, may have had a lot to do with the results obtained. A similar experiment in almost any other community might have left some painful scars upon the author's commendable optimism. Too much of the book is devoted to a discussion of sex, as related to interracial prejudice and phobias, probably because the Canteen experiment involved social and physical contacts between white women and Negro men.

Dr. Baruch's treatise is grim, scientific and comprehensive in scope. Born in California and working in Los Angeles, she has a less good-natured perspective. While discrimination against Negroes properly occupies most of her attention, she does not neglect other minority groups—Mexicans, Jews, Chinese, Catholics, Japanese. In Part One she reminds us that wars always intensify bigotry; she calls attention to modern devices, radio, motion pictures, etc., as media for facilitating the dissemination of hate; but she finds consolation in the fact that we now have the psychological tools to conquer bigotry. In the following chapters, Dr. Baruch discusses areas of prejudice: Housing, the Right to Work, Political Injustice, Education, Discrimination in the Courts and in the Army and Navy. Part Two is devoted to the beginnings of prejudice. Here, Dr. Baruch details the psychological bases of bigotry: customs, imitation, unfortunate associations, misplaced resentments. Attention is given to a subject too frequently neglected, i.e., the prejudices and weaknesses of the minority groups themselves, the economic ambitions of West Coast Japanese, the desire of Jews to compensate for social discrimination by excelling in the arts and professions, the transference of submerged resentments by discrimination against other minorities.

In Part Three, Dr. Baruch discusses cures for prejudice. She advises her readers to "get at the truth," to correct faulty text books, to eliminate myths, to utilize the press, the radio, the movies to circulate positive information. The Springfield Plan and the Youth in Action movement are analyzed and recommended as instruments for a constructive program to meet the challenge of the lunatic fringe, the commercial hate-mongers and the plain, old-fashioned supporters of the status quo. Dr. Baruch reminds us that throughout the country forces exist that are *against* a higher standard of living; and that these forces deliberately prey upon rudimentary prejudices, and foster subversive movements for their own selfish ends. The question, she suggests, is not what we can do for minorities, but what can we do for all the people. She sets forth concrete suggestions. As manufacturing jobs decrease, we must expand construction and service industries, establish local committees on race relations, and employ modern psychological and psychiatric means to eradicate the neuroses that underlie so many of our prejudices. We must learn to recognize our personal resentments so as to avoid transferring them to minority groups; and we must study methods of bringing into the open the submerged hostilities of our school children.

In her final chapter, Dr. Baruch presents a program of self-analysis for the reader. Few of us can pass with flying colors the 12 tests which she prescribes. "Glass House of Prejudice" reflects the wide experience, the profound study and the scientific stature of its author. Dr. Baruch speaks and writes with dignity and authority. Strangely enough, I believe that Miss Halsey's light and somewhat superficial book will reach more people and by its simplicity and provocative thesis, accomplish more than Dr. Baruch's studious and substantial work. Both books are valuable contributions to our consideration of a problem that has already assumed a major role in the contemporary American scene. This country cannot maintain world leadership in the battle for equality unless it evinces a genuine interest in its own minority problems. We cannot ascend what is truly the hill of the Lord unless our own hands are clean. Thus, it behooves us to read and ponder upon every sincere exposition of this disturbing problem, even though we may not see eye to eye with some particular author. 10-13-46

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Books of the Times
New York, N.Y. Wed. 10.2.46

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

MARGARET HALSEY, who did so much to increase international misunderstanding with her hilarious but spiteful impression of the English, "With Malice Toward Some," decided a few years ago that she couldn't be a humorist all the time. Ideals and issues meant as much to her as to anyone and more than to most. The time had come for her to work for democracy, then in arms against its fascist foes, and to do what she could to improve one of the most glaring abuses of the democracy of her native land. She became a senior hostess in charge of a squad of young junior hostesses in a canteen for about half a year. Her book "Color Blind" is the result of considerable personal investigation and of wide research. It is filled with generous emotion and much sound sense. It is not merely a discussion of a tragic situation about which nothing useful can be done, for Miss Halsey has listed useful things that can be done, small things that could add up to a lot in a generation or two. These are valuable assets. They may even make "Color Blind" a positive force for good.

Margaret Halsey

Her Light Style Sometimes Irritating

Even so, "Color Blind" could have been a much better book than it is. Although short, it is still a senior hostess in repetitious. And its light, bright, girlish style, charge of a squad of studded with puns, wise cracks and artificial young junior hostlevity, is marvelously irritating. Fortunately, esses in a canteen for about half way through her book Miss Halsey service men which seems to have realized its unsuitability to her stressed a "no dis- serious subject and assumed a more sober manner, which is quite a relief. crimination" policy. Fundamentally, of course, there is little new She wrote a novel in that can be said by anyone about the position of letter form about her Negroes in this country, handicapped by poverty, experience, "Some of lack of educational opportunities and job discrimination, segregated into ghettos and exposed to constant humiliation. But each book, play or public address which arouses sympathy and interest in persons who have not considered the matter before strikes a blow in a good cause. If an understanding of the prejudices which circumscribe the Negro's life can help to eliminate or diminish those prejudices progress is being made.

It seems to me that Miss Halsey is better in describing the Negro's lot and the affronts he suffers and in arousing sympathy than she is in explaining and trying to exorcise prejudices. Her account of the resentment felt by all Negroes against white people and her interpretation of it as democracy at work, citizens demanding their rights, is excellent. Her attack on the false myths about Negroes as a race is excellent also. Her plea not to form generalizations based upon individual cases is sound. If a white person knows an irresponsible and childish Negro he is apt to conclude that all Negroes are irresponsible and foolish instead of using ordinary common sense and realizing that individual character is always individual, even when handicapped by an unfortunate environment.

She Analyzes Bases of Prejudice

White prejudices against Negroes, Miss Halsey thinks, is based fundamentally upon two factors, the economic and the sexual. She believes that the desire for a cheap labor supply is behind much "white supremacy" talk. As for the sexual factor in prejudice, she theorizes at length about the fears, misconceptions and legends connected with it. And she concludes that much of white prejudice is an unexpressed and unrealized fear of the Negro's sexual attraction. There may be something in Miss Halsey's contentions, with their rather fancy psychological explorations of the sexual element in our civilization, but they are the least convincing elements in her book.

Since no striking changes can be accomplished quickly in so difficult a matter as race relations, Miss Halsey argues that actual social equality is posterity's worry, not ours. But it we of the present Generation can do something to further economic and educational equality and to reduce

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It seems to me that Miss Halsey is better in describing the Negro's lot and the affronts he suffers and in arousing sympathy than she is in explaining and trying to exorcise prejudices. Her account of the resentment felt by all Negroes against white people and her interpretation of it as democracy at work, citizens demanding their rights, is excellent. Her attack on the false myths about Negroes as a race is excellent also. Her plea not to form generalizations based upon individual cases is sound. If a white person knows an irresponsible and childish Negro he is apt to conclude that all Negroes are irresponsible and foolish instead of using ordinary common sense and realizing that individual character is always individual, even when handicapped by an unfortunate environment.

She Analyzes Bases of Prejudice

White prejudices against Negroes, Miss Halsey thinks, is based fundamentally upon two factors, the economic and the sexual. She believes that the desire for a cheap labor supply is behind much "white supremacy" talk. As for the sexual factor in prejudice, she theorizes at length about the fears, misconceptions and legends connected with it. And she concludes that much of white prejudice is an unexpressed and unrealized fear of the

Books of the Times

New York, N.Y. Wed. 10-2-46

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

MARGARET HALSEY, who did so much to increase international misunderstanding with her hilarious but spiteful impression of the English, "With Malice Toward Some," decided a few years ago that she couldn't be a humorist all the time. Ideals and issues meant as much to her as to anyone and more than to most. The time had come for her to work for democracy, then in arms against its fascist foes, and to do what she could to improve one of the most glaring abuses of the democracy of her native land. She became a senior hostess in charge of a squad of young junior hostesses in a canteen for service men which seems to have stressed a "no discrimination" policy. She wrote a novel in letter form about her experience, "Some of My Best Friends Are Soldiers," and now she has written a book about America, "Color Blind: A White Woman Looks at the Negro."*

Her book is the fruit of considerable personal investigation and of wide research. It is filled with generous emotion and much sound sense. It is not merely a discussion of a tragic situation about which nothing useful can be done, for Miss Halsey has listed useful things that can be done, small things that could add up to a lot in a generation or two. These are valuable assets. They may even make "Color Blind" a positive force for good.

Her Light Style Sometimes Irritating

Even so, "Color Blind" could have been a much better book than it is. Although short, it is still a bit long in repetitious. And its light, bright style, studded with puns, wise cracks and artificial levity, is marvelously irritating. Fortunately, her book Miss Halsey has realized its unsuitability to her subject and assumed a more sober manner, which is quite a relief.

Fundamentally, of course, there is little new in prejudice, she theorizes at length about the position of Negroes in this country, handicapped by poverty, lack of educational opportunities and job discrimination, segregated into ghettos and exposed

Margaret Halsey

segregation and discrimination, then social equality is bound to be brought a little nearer into the foreseeable future. In fact, Miss Halsey predicts that ultimately in the fulness of time social equality will be so completely realized that intermarriage will be possible for those who might want it without fear or inconvenience. 10-2-46

"Color Blind" seems to have been written on the optimistic assumption that if its readers are intellectually persuaded they will want to take instant action. Perhaps Miss Halsey has underestimated such matters as human inertia, exclusive concern with self and refusal to worry about other people's troubles. At any rate, she has included in her pages advice to white people on how to behave naturally and tactfully when meeting Negroes and specific instructions on how to help with the general problem by reading books, giving money to worthy causes, supporting local committees, writing pressure letters and welcoming Negroes into schools, churches, neighborhoods, etc.

The Negro-American: Myth vs. Reality

The Times Book Review
New York, N.Y.
Sun. 10-13-46

COLOR BLIND. A White Woman Looks at the Negro. By Margaret Halsey. 163 pp. New York: Simon & Schuster. $2.50.

By MARGARET MEAD

THIS is a straightforward, courageous and delightful book about what Americans (any American, but especially Northerners) can do to expedite the absorption of our Negro American citizens into full membership in our democracy.

Miss Halsey takes the details of her text from her experience in a service men's canteen with a no-discrimination policy. For every generalization she makes she can quote a service man—or a letter from someone who applauded or protested or questioned. For every query her reader might raise—although she leaves very few questions untouched—she has an illustrative answer from her own experience. After convincing the reader that there was a canteen where social equality was practiced without casualties—and with the beneficial effect of training many American men and women, regardless of race, to treat each other like people—she plunges into the very center of most of the arguments on the place of Negro Americans in our national life, which are usually left implicit and furtive.

The gist of her argument runs as follows: this is a democracy, and in a democracy with education for all, everyone is brought up to believe that all the citizens of a country should be treated as full human beings. When this ideal fails to materialize, those who belong to the inside, or discriminating, group feel guilty and welcome any argument to justify their position—and those who are outside feel enormous and justified resentment. Both resentment and guilt prove handicaps in personal relations, which, she believes, neither white Americans nor Negro Americans are very good at, without practice. The comforting myths which help to justify keeping the Negro American as an outgroup, she sums up as "coal-black babies and riots," the fear of sexuality of a group that has been denied the right to the kind of education and way of life which makes men control their impulses, and the fear of violence which feeds on a knowledge of the degree of economic exploitation to which the Negro is subjected.

Having underlined this whole argument, again illustrated it from canteen experience, and given a list of things which anybody, in any suburb, can do, she closes on a note of vigorous optimism that America as a democracy—which means, as a country that can integrate all its citizens—will keep on functioning. "We are not functioning brilliantly as a democracy, but we never have. Brilliance is not an attribute of democracies — which when they cease to bumble and fumble and lurch and sprawl toward their goals, also cease to be democracies."

The Times Book Review
New York, N.Y.

HER book has two types of importance. It is important because it discusses actual everyday events, and how to work through them, on the thesis that "the resolution of racial tensions in this country is going to depend upon the building up of uneventful, undramatic, unremarkable relationships between Negro and white people in the same general economic and cultural classes and with the same problems and interests." More important still is the frankness with which Miss Halsey faces the central issue, which so many well-intentioned workers in the field of racial relations think it wise to dodge . . . the perennial problem, "Would you like your daughter to marry one?" Sun. 10-13-46

After an overhaul of the myths about Negro sexuality and some of their causes, in the theory of forbidden fruit, and middle-class envy, and economic usefulness, she goes straight to the point that you can't have democracy—in the American sense — unless people are free to choose their mates among all the other members of the society. Here her skill as a pleader for social action comes into play. She recognizes that this social action will take time. She documents the extent to which — at present — Negro men do not want either to dance with, far less marry, white girls. She gives a lot of security to those who fear some terrible immediate results from a modicum of social equality. She comforts the unready, she recognizes how heavily such a possibility bears down on the whole mores of the South: she does not scold the South, but she does exhort the North. She sees a future generation who will feel very differently.

There will be a small group of whites who will marry only whites, a small group of Negroes who will marry only Negroes, and a much larger group in between of Negroes and whites who feel free to marry each other *if they want to.* * * * There was a time when sincere and well-meaning people felt, and felt passionately, that to administer an anesthetic for an operation was to flout the will of God. It seems incredible now that human beings could have formulated a Deity who rejoices in our pain and who would be angry if we were spared any of it; but once it seemed not only plausible but changeless and eternal. In the same way, the feelings, myths and prejudices about the Negro American which now seem so vivid and real to some of our white contemporaries will take their place on the shelf along with the belief in witches and the notion that the earth is the center of the solar system.

The social scientists, inspecting some of Miss Halsey's vivid argumentation, will have to say that she has over-simplified some of her casual statements about a very complex set of social relationships. But the same scientist, concerned with the most useful formulations for action, formulations which substitute no new and harmful group partisanships for those they displace, can only applaud the soundness of her approach. Where she has over-simplified in explanation, she has compensated for it by the wisdom of the concrete courses she proposes. For the reader who insists upon enjoying life even when facing its most grim and exacting problems, the book has all the verve which Miss Halsey's wit and a humorous acceptance of the inevitability of sex can give.

'Color Blind' to Be Reviewed by Redding for AFRO Readers

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.
Sat. 10-26-46

NEW YORK—"Color Blind," by Margaret Halsey, acclaimed by race relations specialists, and heralded by Dr. Daniel Poling, editor of the Christian Herald, as "the most searching and intelligent race study that has appeared in a long decade," will be reviewed by J. Saunders Redding in a forthcoming edition of the AFRO.

Miss Halsey brands as "one of the most monotonous aspects of race relations in the United States, the blind acceptance—by otherwise sensible people—of any wild, half-baked, fragmentary, unsubstantiated or even patently absurd cock-and-bull story having to do with colored people and sex."

Suckers for Lies

"People who balance their checkbooks, total up the slips for grocery, count over the laundry when it comes back, and in many other ways behave with cool, hard-headed realism will turn out to be the suckers of the world when it comes to colored sexuality," says the author.

"Nobody on God's green footstool could sell these people stock in a phony gold mine, but when the issue is sex and colored people, they sit with their mouths open like fledgling birds and swallow whatever is dropped in."

Miss Halsey points out that another factor in racial discrimination is unadulterated economics. "When you refuse to mingle," she emphasizes, "all you are doing is making it possible for employers . . . to get colored people to work for them for less money than they would have to pay you."

9 1946

Meet Frank "Foxes of Harrow" Yerby

Story About Whites No Social Protest Novel

AFRO-American
Baltimore, Md.

By Michael Carter

VALLEY STREAM, L.I.—For the very first time in this newest burgeoning of writing, a colored author has dropped the racial scene to write a historical novel about white people.

The author is Frank Yerby. His novel, "The Foxes of Harrow," treats eloquently two of the touchiest subjects in the American thought pattern: sexual inter-play between the races and the Reconstruction Period.

3-2-46

The 534 page book, just published by Dial Press, will be compared with "Gone With the Wind," because of its size, scope and locale. But it will be a poor comparison. Yerby has seen the South and race relations in America through dispassionate eyes, and has written a warm, truthful account of what he saw.

Only Colored Residents

Readers who like swashbuckling, fast riding, duel fighting, heavy-loving, historical novels will find this is exactly what they are looking for.

Off handedly, it is an escape novel. It has no social message and makes no protest against the ugliness of race relations in America.

3-2-46

Becomes a Gentleman

But unconsciously the reader will find his sympathy going to Inch, the brilliant slave who reads law and becomes a gentleman in the sense that he is educated, mannerly and kind.

And Inch's mother, the handsome black woman who kills herself rather than submit to slavery, is obviously a better person than Odalie, Stephen Fox's frigid wife, the mistress of Harrow, his plantation.

As Fox rises from a shady gambler waiting to be picked off a sandbar to become the owner of the vast plantation, an opulent house and many slaves, he, and the people around him are influenced on every level of their lives by the colored people in the State.

All this is subtly and naturally told. And with it goes all the duels, intrigues, quarrels over the honor of "ladies," and 1860 political arguments that any historical novel enthusiast can read in a week.

Sat.

Throughout the book Yerby makes comments which are timely, such as the FEPC filibuster and Nazi Germany.

After a debate against secession Yerby says: "The facts were howled down; the South has always preferred oratory."

And a German planter of circa 1846 is shown as an early type of Nazi.

3-2-46

Frank Yerby, his wife, Flora, and their trio of tow-headed children live in a little six-room plus sun parlor and dinette, red oak frame house in this little Long Island town that looks like all the other little middle-class homes on the Island.

As you leave the railroad station you are bound to notice the anti-Semitic slogans carefully worded-in over the advertising placards in the waiting rooms. They are obviously written by unhurried hands. One of them says, "Rout the Jews," and another says "And the n——rs too."

The Yerbys are the only colored people in the town. Aside from their storekeepers, mailman, a Protestant and a Jewish family, no one else in the town speaks to them anymore.

They stopped speaking when they discovered that Mrs. Yerby was not really white, but colored. And they are not proud to have a famous writer in their midst.

He's colored too. And they don't let their children play with the little Yerbys.

Yerby is not unmoved by this, but it doesn't annoy him and he doesn't discuss it.

Talking about the Foxes, as he calls his book, he is but little more articulate. "The Foxes represent three years of work in research and one year in actual writing.

"I wrote it here nights while I worked at Ranger aircraft in the daytime. I typed the first drafts and my wife did the finished job.

"I collected a vast mountain of research material. Oh, I know how they made pies, ice cream and cane sugar and a lot more about the South of that period.

"I'm writing another book also. This one will deal more with Reconstruction.

Here is the story you have been waiting to read. IT'S A FIRST—the first press interview with Frank Yerby, author of "Foxes of Harrow," the new 534 page novel about one of the touchiest subjects in American life.

The Book of the Month Club News said the book is "good, honest, headlong romance which will hold any reader who can tolerate beautiful women and brave, baffled men."

Born in Georgia

"Why did I start writing? Because Flora got a club and said, 'You Write.' Of course she did it gently."

And that was all Yerby wanted to say about himself. The rest of the interview—the first he has given—was picked out, sentence by sentence. He is modest.

Born in Augusta, Ga., in 1916 Yerby's family moved, a few years later, to Durham, N.C., where: "We lived next door to Ed and Maymette Spaulding and a lot of other nice people."

His next move was to Fisk University where he got a Matser of Arts degree.

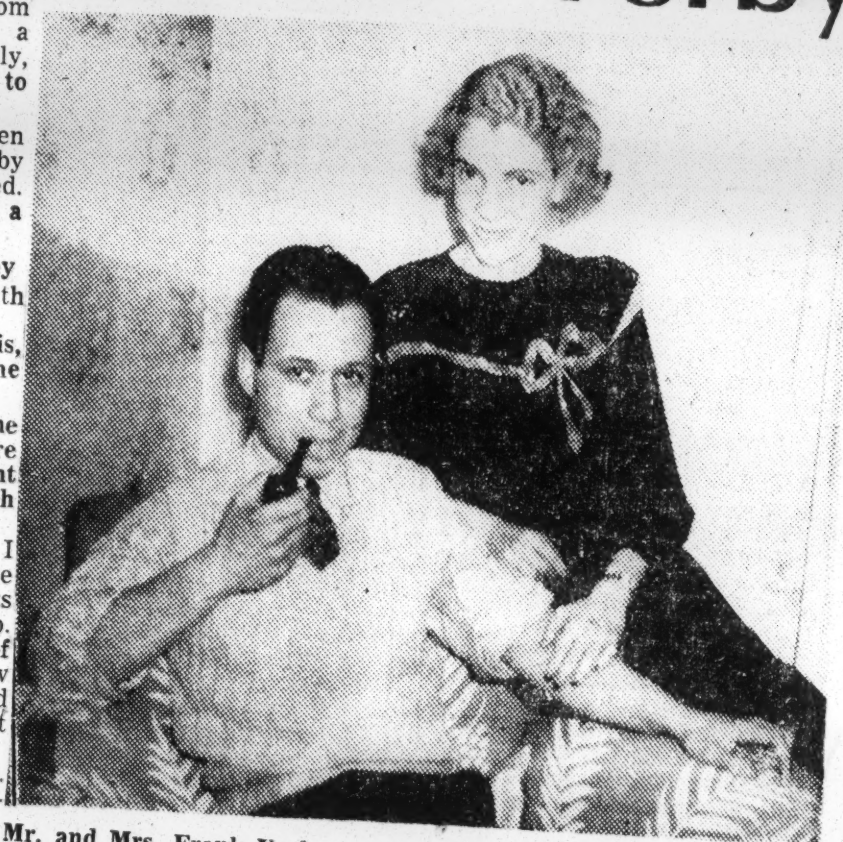
Going North "because I had to," Yerby worked on the Federal Writers Project in Chicago, but returned to Baton Rouge, La. and taught English at Southern University.

There he fell in love with New Orleans and with Flora Williams, whom he married in 1940. "I left the college because I was only making $138 a month and we moved up to Detroit.

"I got a job at Ford's plant. I was promoted to the metallurgy department and the work took a lot out of me, but I still did some writing."

He entered a literary contest and "did a social protest novel that had an odor about it. It was pretty shabby stuff. I submitted it and knew it couldn't win. It didn't.

"It was a conventional social protest novel. I'd be ashamed to write it now, but it did two good things for me.



Mr. and Mrs. Frank Yerby in their Long Island Home. They met in New Orleans where Mr. Yerby was on the faculty of Southern University.

"First, it taught me that I was not equipped to write social protest stuff. I've been spared most of the hard sides of race relations in America.

3-2-46

"And too, it introduced me to Muriel Fuller, who made possible the 'Foxes of Harrow.'"

Complete Notes

The book is dedicated to her. Miss Fuller liked some of the lines and passages in Yerby's first book and vainly tried to peddle it.

About this time he wrote "Health Card," a short story which won the O'Henry award for 1944.

His notes on New Orleans were pretty complete by then and with the award money he and his wife moved to New York.

"We didn't move to Harlem because I don't like ugliness. I don't like any slum area. So we moved to this town and I worked in Ranger Aireraft Co."

At his wife's insistence he started on "The Foxes."

"By the time I wrote 27 pages, the book was sold. But there followed many short tempered story conferences and lots of times I wanted to give it up. I over wrote it.

"The first draft was 647 pages. We lopped off a couple hundred and should have cut it down 200 more. It was easier to keep it up than to stop it."

There has already been talk that Hollywood will buy the book. "I don't care whether they do," Yerby said, "but I won't stand to see any of the colored characters debased.

3-2-46

"I painted them as they were—human beings with human qualities—and if it's filmed, they must remain that way."

It will be the same with his next book, "Ignoble Victory," which deals with white aspects of the post Civil War period. "I've been working on it since I completed 'The Foxes.' It should be ready in a year."

Sat.

Frank Yerby in New Orleans collected the material for his historical novel which has been judged superior to "Gone With the Wind" in its understanding of human relations between white and colored during Reconstruction.

No Protest Novel

As the interview was about over Yerby said: "Look, I want to stress one or two things.

"I am a writer. I'm not exposed to the kind of life that would enable me to produce a good social protest novel. I don't care what some publishers, he thinks, tend to "Dumas, the elder, was proud of his race and so am I. But I don't flaunt it," he said.

Writer First

I want to be a writer first, and thing else next."

he blurb on the jacket of "The es" will not identify Yerby as red, and whatever pictures of are used show him up as he a man who could be a dark e man or a fair colored man.

A DEMOCRATIC INNOVATION
REVEILLE FOR RADICALS, by Saul D. Alinsky. Published by the University of Chicago Press; 288 pages, $2.50.

This is the story of the People's Organizations, that amazing movement which started slums who contrived to get a college educa- come a criminologist. It was his conditions which produce crimi- him into the broader preoccu- w to make democracy work on

Alinsky is himself a product of the Chicago bring democracy down to the level of the average fellow who is deprived of the privilege of being an affirmative citizen.

2-2-46

articles in The Washington Post by the wife the neighborhood level. People have a right of the publisher, Mrs. Eugene Meyer. The to vote every once in a while, but otherwise interest thus aroused will be intensified by they are pretty helpless. It was this book, which the passion and that, through the Alinsky's idea zeal of Saul Alinsky, who is responsible for council, through a cross-section organization the launching of this extraordinary venture in representing all groups and honestly devoted democratic action. to common concerns, much could be done to

3-2-46

keepers, in depressed sections of our great cities. The "back of the yards" district, dirty, smoky, smelly and ugly, could certainly be improved by an active neighborhood council dedicated to regeneration of the section through the cooperative effort of its own people. It has been improved by just such an agency which Alinsky and co-workers set going to surprise everybody with this release of self-help for civic and social betterment.

Alinsky explains how this came about. He had the assistance of the Catholic Church, which is strong among the stockyard workers. He drew upon the labor unions. He even attracted storekeepers, the local bourgeoisie, bringing them into a liberal movement instead of allowing them to become proto-Fascists. Under shrewd, realistic and yet high-minded guidance, the little guys are having their say and discovering in themselves qualities for service and leadership which would otherwise have been dormant. Through working together for a common cause, residents of "back of the yards" stopped brawling and hating and found an embryonic league of nations as antagonisms brought from the Old World faded out in a collective endeavor.

Alinsky has used every available agency available to achieve this end. But he does not, in this book, hesitate to castigate various groups which one would have expected him to deal with more tenderly. He condemns social workers for their remoteness from the problems they are supposed to solve. He condemns liberals because they talk too much and do too little. He condemns labor unions for having grown so rich, fat and respectable that they behave more and more like organized business. He finds fault with organized religion on the ground that much of it is "spiritually bankrupt." 2-2-46

But he is ready to use all these, capital, labor, religion, in his council in a fight for better housing, hot school lunches, the curbing of delinquency, the reduction of intolerance. He has worked out a technique of local leadership emerging from the stifled masses in a drive for jobs, for protection against disease, for ample recreation. And the result has been a surprising success in the underprivileged community where he started and in other similar communities. What this book is intended to do is to arouse throughout the country such a belief in the efficacy of his method that it will be used on an ever-widening scale to make democracy function in places from which it has been banished.

By inducing and implementing the habit of self-government on the local plane, the People's Organizations are making democracy function more completely. For initiating this departure, Alinsky deserves the applause he is receiving. He seems to have struck upon a dependable device for achieving a rebirth of freedom in our urban communities. It takes a very constructive radical to do that. This book is a challenge to others who also yearn for a finer, richer, fuller, abler life for Americans who have been submerged because they have been voiceless. Where there is no vision, the people perish.—J. R. F.

TAN GI HISTORIAN—Miss Jean Byers, 22-year-old white girl, has been commissioned by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to write a complete history of the Negro in World War II.

For NAACP Courier

WHITE GIRL WRITING TAN GI HISTORY

Pittsburgh, Pa. 2-16-46

By EVALYN COPPOC

NEW YORK—Realizing the need for a complete history of the Negro in World War II, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has commissioned a 22-year-old white girl, Miss Jean Byers, to write such an account.

A graduate of Smith College, where she majored in history and government, petite Miss Byers was former research assistant of Time and Life magazines. A native of Boston, she was for a brief period affiliated with the Association of Colored Graduate Nurses as a part-time research worker. She has worked in the field of history and research since her graduation from college in 1944.

TO BE BOOK LENGTH

The work was originally planned in pamphlet form but data involving Negro troops is so extensive that the history will probably be book length when completed, Miss Myers said. In compiling material for the story, she is using accounts gathered from old newspapers, from first hand information gained through discussions with Army and Navy officials and from knowledge received through conversation with many Negro servicemen. At present she is attempting to get statements from Army officers who were in charge of colored troops.

Miss Byers will include in the story detailed accounts of the Army's treatment of colored troops and the rejection of Negroes in Selective Service. Special attention will be given to the activities of combat troops, she said. Research work on the history began last month.

VERY ENTHUSIASTIC

Quite personable and attractive, Miss Byers is very enthusiastic about her new assignment. For a long time she has been desirous of working with the NAACP, she said, and when the offer to do the history was made she accepted at once. In speaking of Miss Byers' assignment, Madison Jones, NAACP administrative assistant, said:

"The Association is endeavoring to get out an authenticated history that will tell the real story of the Negro soldier."

Mr. Jones expressed the hope that the account, when released, will offset the numerous untrue stories of Negro troops previously circulated by the press and individuals.

So Was 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'

Times-Dispatch

DEEP ARE THE ROOTS, a play in three acts, by Arnaud d'Usseau and James Gow. New York, Charles Scribners' Sons. $2.50.

Richmond, Va.

THE play, "Deep Are the Roots," was produced in September, 1945, at the Fulton Theater in New York and became immediately the subject of acclaim and controversy.

Briefly the plot concerns a Negro war hero who returns to a small Southern town, forgets any ideas of race segregation, falls in love with a Senator's daughter and generally plays hell with a staid community life which apparently had been unruffled since the War Between the States. Sun 2-24-46

What the authors seem to advocate is complete intermingling between Negroes and whites—including marriage. To drive home their plea in a manner most likely to produce results at the box office they have presented a highly colored and inflammatory picture of the treatment of Negroes in the South, where, to believe this play, every elderly man is a "senator"—with one or two beautiful daughters and a host of politically-minded kinsmen.

It is the typical Northern version of a South where injustice, fear of the Negro and the determination to see that he doesn't get a fair chance all are intermingled.

Like so many playwrights and authors, d'Usseau and Gow present the so-called "Negro problem" as existing only in the South, where only one or two persons—most likely visitors from the North—realize there is any "problem" to be solved.

There is the Southern Senator, his two charming daughters, one of whom—Generva—falls in love with the returned Negro officer, Brett Charles, the nincompoopish cousin with a bent for politics, and the Northern writer who eggs Generva on and at the same time keeps one eye on Alice, her sister, whom he is to marry.

Of course the important point about the story is whether it can actually solve anything by depicting the Negro as being badly mistreated socially and physically by a brutal, unfeeling white caste represented by Senator Langdon, who is afraid of possible dominance by returning Negro soldiers.

The fact that a play by its very nature can only touch on certain aspects of a question makes "Deep Are the Roots" particularly obnoxious to many, who will see in it a one-sided and apparently childish effort to bring before the public the racial question. Sun 2-24-46

Undoubtedly it was good box office, but so was "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and there are several basic similarities of thought between the two plays.—H. L. S.

BRAZIL: PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS, by T. Lynn Smith (Louisiana State, $6.50). Brazil is destined to play an increasingly important role in international politics if only because of her vast economic potentialities. This volume gives detailed information on the country's natural wealth and discusses the social setting in which it is found and which will determine the nature of its exploitation. There are useful chapters on land settlement and land tenure; statistics on population; the racial question; social institutions such as the family, school, church and government; levels and standards of living. Both historical and factual in its approach, this book satisfies a real need for information about a little-explored country. Mag 3-11-46

BRIEFER COMMENT

The Black Common Man

The Nation 2-16-46 New York

IN "MARCHING BLACKS" (Dial, $2.50) Representative Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., presents what he calls "an interpretative history of the rise of the black common man." The rise of the "black common man" is traced through three periods: Africa to Chicago, covering the period 1526-1920; the period of "the boom and the crash," 1920-40; and the period from Pearl Harbor to the present. The discussion of the changes in the status of the Negro during these three periods is characterized by many shrewd insights, novel and unwarranted interpretations of historical facts, and much justifiable indignation. For example, such phenomena as the emergence of a class of free Negroes before the Civil War and the advantageous position of the house slaves and the mulattoes are treated as if they were due to some consciously planned conspiracy against the black masses. In championing the cause of the black masses against the talented tenth of lighter complexion, the Reverend Mr. Powell indulges in much rabble rousing, claiming that he is a descendant of the black field Negroes. His section on what happened to the Negro from 1920 to 1940 offers a fair analysis of the changes in the Negro's status as long as it sticks to facts. The third part contains an indictment of the nation for its treatment of the Negro during World War II, which, Powell holds, began as a race war and was converted into Civil War II to complete the emancipation of the Negro. We are still engaged in Civil War II, which can only be won by the migration of the millions of Negroes from the South.

Hampton's Book To Be Released Friday

Kansas City, Mo. The Call 1-31-46

CHICAGO. — Lionel Hampton, as give the reader a background

FRANKLIN FRAZIER King of the Vibraharp, winner of the Capital Press Club Award for distinguished service in music and race relations during 1945, and Alice C. Browning, editor of Negro Story and Child Play magazine, announce the release of "Lionel Hampton Swing Book," Monday, March 25. 3-22-46

This 160-page "Swing Book" unique in its field, published by Lionel Hampton and the Negro Story Press and edited by Alice C. Browning, will feature all current swing personalities as well as those discussed or shown in pictures will be Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Buddy Johnson, Tiny Bradshaw, Louis Armstrong, Benny Goodman, Charlie Barnett, Lou Jordan, Walter Dyett, Woody Herman, Hazel Scott, Lena Horne, and scores of others.

9 1946

This Story Had to Be Told

afro-American Baltimore Md.

Author of "If He Hollers," in Exclusive Interview, Describes West Coast Shipyard Conditions

Sat 1-5-46

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK—Chester B. Himes has written the first novel, "If He Hollers Let Him Go," about race relations in a West Coast shipyard. It had to be written. For the first time in American industry history white and colored workers, in extremely large numbers, were tossed together in a war-time industrial maelstrom.

The close association of the two races revealed serious, deep-seated friction and suspicions. It also showed, Himes said, that white and colored workers could work together and it proved that colored Americans have industrial skill.

But it also brought into the open some usually hushed topics and strange fears.

Some whites were afraid that white women, working in war plants, would lose their Caucasian chastity to attractive colored men.

Himes slices into the problem and shows the relationship between a lustfull white wench, Madge, and Bob Jones, leaderman of a jim-crow crew in his West Coast shipyard.

Bob Jones is simultaneously attracted and repelled by the woman.

She, in turn, finds that he appeals to her and is alternately attracted to him and frightened by him. Ultimately Bob Jones calls her: "A beat white chick with dirty feet."

She is always in the superior position and is finally responsible for Bob Jones's being beaten up, demoted and fired from his job.

Parallel with this cord in the story is the part about Bob Jones's love life with an educated colored girl who has made an "adjustment" to the white world.

There is also Bob's conflict with male white workers at the yard and his problems of being a "colored boss" and yet retaining friendly dignity in his relationship to his jim-crow crew.

A Tough Book

It's a toughly written book, done in the best tradition of the James M. Cain and James T. Farrell school of writers. To members of this school a spade is not only a spade. It's a gol durned stinking spade.

The man who created the caustic dialogue and true-to-life situations is meek mannered, pleasant voiced and only 35 years old.

He has a slight impediment of speech and is so courteous that he seems almost European in manner. He has no unpleasing affectations, however. He's just naturally a quiet, reticent, mannerly individual.

That is, he's reticent until he wants experience, his handsome brown-skinned wife, Jean, says. "He wanted experience in the West Coast shipyards.

"I gave up my good job with the City of Cleveland and we went traipsing off to California. I'm glad I went. I'd go anywhere with Chess," she said.

Himes told the AFRO, in his first exclusive interview with a newspaper, that he had "worked previously for a Cleveland daily paper and had written some articles and stories for Esquire and Coronet."

Sat 1-5-46

"Right now I'm working on a second novel and some articles. One of my articles is about Japanese-Americans. I saw lots of them on the Coast."

Character Composites

Although his novel is told in first person, Himes said the principal character and all the other characters were composites of people he had worked with.

"I've been writing for a long time—used to sell to Abbotts Monthly, and a lot of other defunct magazines. I settled down to this novel in 1944 when I won a Rosenwald award."

Before the Rosenwald award and before money started coming in from royalties, Himes also worked on the Federal Writers' Project.

"But everything in my literary life now dates from California. In Hollywood, I discovered that colored people have made some headway in every movie field except script writing.

"There are colored technicians, laboratory workers and specialists—as well as performers—but no writers for the screen."

On the West Coast he was impressed with the CIO's efforts on behalf of colored people in every phase of life. "Unfortunately," he declared, "the CIO's policy is not nationally observed."

Significant Split

He believes that the organization is taking a dominant role in the direction of colored intellectual life. This place was formerly held, he said, by the Communists.

"The split with the Communists came during the 1930 period and was widened by the war." He doesn't know whether this can be described in terms of "good or bad, but it is significant."

Asked how the idea for "If He Hollers Let Him Go" was conceived, Himes said:

"If you take a theme of race frustration, draw your main characters and start a chain of interrelated incidents in motion you have a beginning.

"In my novel I let the stream of events lead to the ultimate frustration of my principal character.

"Every colored person in America is driven almost to destruction or crisis by continued frustration.

"In my novel I develop the frustration of one man. Any man is likely to have some frustrations.

"But in the case of Bob Jones, a series of events just adds to them until the crisis develops."

In writing the book he did not "draw heavily from personal experience because I also had a good background of observation. I talked to people and saw what was happening in their lives."

Has Superb Memory

Himes has a superb memory and can recall snatches of conversation, incidents and day-to-day events which he draws upon for literary material. Bob Jones is composed of such elements.

Asked whether he were attempting to prove anything when he played up on the sexual affinity of Madge and Bob, Himes replied: "You can always put a colored writer on the spot with a question like that.

Sat 1-5-46

"If there is an affinity it's because of false and unnatural restrictions placed on inter-race activity combined with people's normal curiosity

"The danger for expression of such curiosity in America lies only in the tremendous penalties imposed," he said.

The following quotation, picked from Himes's conversation with me about Selective Service, offers a good clue to his total thinking:

"Not since Civil War days has a jim-crow army was imposed. But there was a jim-crow America to take a definite stand on her race problem.

Should Use Force

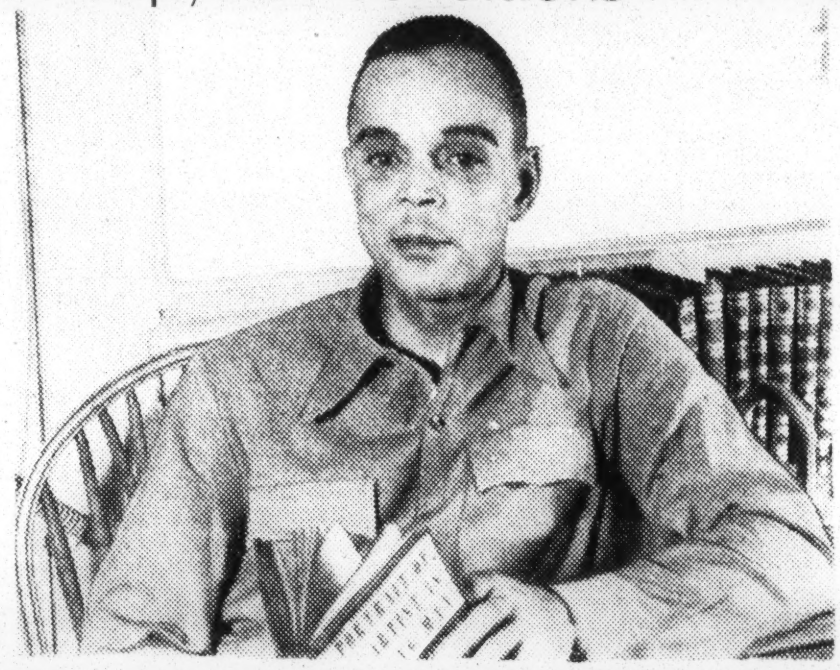
"We could have forced the country into a similar position—making it take a stand—if 25,000 or 100,000 colored men had demanded equality under Selective Service.

"Theoretically the draft boards operated democratically, and the country to take a stand . . ." He did not finish.

Have to Fight

"It's hard to get colored people to stand up for their civil rights. The only way you get anything, even things that are due you, in this country is to fight for it.

"Labor is fighting now. We have



Chester B. Himes, author of "If He Hollers Let Him Go," relaxes in his New York home after spending several months in a West Coast shipyard where he received first-hand information for his book.

Mrs. Chester B. Himes, left, who is shown with her husband, gave up her job in Cleveland and went to California with him.

New Pamphlet On Ben Davis

Taking the election of Per Davis and 1946, "resulted not only from Jr. to the New York City Council the united support of the Negro as his starting point, Robert Minor people, but also from an alliance of sketches the background of three the Negro AND the most powerful periods during which Negroes have sections of the labor movement of been elected to legislative bodies. in New York City."

his new pamphlet "Tell the People The pamphlet also includes Ben —How Ben Davis Was Elected." Davis biographical data.

(New Century Publishers, 5c.)

Instances are given of the election of Negroes to state legislatures and to Congress, following the Civil War. This was followed by a period of Southern reaction, supported by Northern industrialists, which resulted in preventing the election of

NAACP Issues Free Veterans' Handbook

A 24-page handbook for veterans, Bureau of the NAACP, 100 Massachusetts av. NW, Washington 1 DC, or from the national office, 20 W 40 st, New York 18, NY.

Veterans or their families may secure copies free from branches of the NAACP, from the Washington

1946

This Story Had to Be Told

afro-american Baltimore Md.

Author of "If He Hollers," in Exclusive Interview, Describes West Coast Shipyard Conditions

Sat 1-5-46

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK—Chester B. Himes has written the first novel, "If He Hollers Let Him Go," about race relations in a West Coast shipyard. It had to be written. For the first time in American industry history white and colored workers, in extremely large numbers, were tossed together in a war-time industrial maelstrom.

The close association of the two races revealed serious, deep-seated friction and suspicions. It also showed, Himes said, that white and colored workers could work together and it proved that colored Americans have industrial skill.

But it also brought into the open some usually hushed topics and strange fears.

Some whites were afraid that white women, working in war plants, would lose their Caucasian chastity to attractive colored men.

Himes slices into the problem and shows the relationship between a lustfull white wench, Madge, and Bob Jones, leaderman of a jim-crow crew in his West Coast shipyard.

Bob Jones is simultaneously attracted and repelled by the woman.

She, in turn, finds that he appeals to her and is alternately attracted to him and frightened by him. Ultimately Bob Jones calls her: "A beat white chick with dirty feet."

She is always in the superior position and is finally responsible for Bob Jones's being beaten up, demoted and fired from his job.

Parallel with this cord in the story is the part about Bob Jones's love life with an educated colored girl who has made an "adjustment" to the white world.

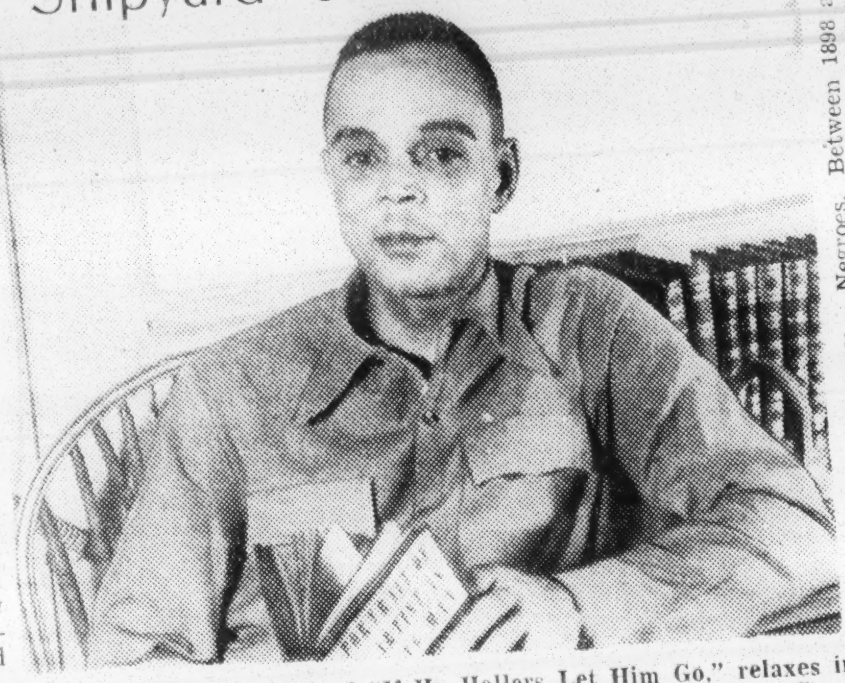
There is also Bob's conflict with male white workers at the yard and his problems of being a "colored boss" and yet retaining friendly dignity in his relationship to his jim-crow crew.

A Tough Book

It's a toughly written book, done in the best tradition of the James M. Cain and James T. Farrell school of writers. To members of this school a spade is not only a spade. It's a gol durned stinking spade.

The man who created the caustic dialogue and true-to-life situations is meek mannered, pleasant voiced and only 35 years old.

He has a slight impediment of speech and is so courteous that he seems almost European in manner. He has no unpleasing affectations, however. He's just naturally a quiet, reticent, mannerly individual.



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15 Exclusive Picture Stories

that trace the miraculous growth of Chicago's PILGRIM BAPTIST CHURCH . . . give you the answer to WILL BLACK EAGLES BE GROUNDED . . . put you in tune with music masters RUDOLPH DUNBAR and HARRY T. BURLEIGH and TEDDY WILSON . . . take you "on stage" with JEB, with SHOWBOAT and ST. LOUIS WOMAN . . . catch SONNY JAMESON, basketball star in action . . . outline practical FUTURES FOR NEGRO TEEN-AGERS . . . PLUS many other reader "musts."

10 Blue Ribbon Departments

OUR WORLD studies NEGRO HOUSING . . . digs up money-saving FACTS FOR NEGRO VETERANS . . . devotes a TEEN-PAGE to the up-and-coming generation . . . sharpens your wits on PHOTO-HISTORY Quiz . . . offers a POT OF GOLD to the young lady who says "That's Me" . . . selects THE BEST IN RECORDS . . . chases the blues with OUR WORLD LAUGHS and throws in a generous bonus for another Blue Ribbon specials.

5 Banner Features for Women

Timely hints on DRESSES FOR AN EASTER WARDROBE . . . a famous stylist's answer to WHAT SHALL I DO ABOUT MY HAIR . . . expert suggestions on MAKING A SMALL ROOM LIVABLE . . . a specialist's advice on JEALOUSY AMONG CHILDREN IN THE NURSERY and FOOD TALK that will be "the talk of the town."

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AT ALL NEWSSTANDS

On Revelation and "Deep Are the Roots"

DEEP ARE THE ROOTS. By Arnaud d'Usseau and James Gow. 204 pp. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

By LEWIS NICHOLS

A FEW years ago James Gow and Arnaud d'Usseau took a warning glance at fascism in the play called "Tomorrow the World." Early this season they offered Broadway its first serious—and successful—drama of the year. "Deep Are the Roots" takes up the problem of equality in the South—and the suffering of its protagonist, a young Negro university graduate, lately an officer in the Army, who returns home to find prejudice unchanged in his absence. The climax comes when a daughter of the town's leading white family offers him marriage—and he tells her that such a union would offer no solution to the question of general equality, that they would be just "an island," and two people "cannot create a world apart."

In their preface to the published version, the authors take issue with criticisms made of "Deep Are the Roots." Is it melodrama? "Why this noticeable fear of violence on the stage?" reply the authors. "This genteel shying away from anything that might be considered excessive emotion? Is this a canon of taste arbitrarily invented by the critics?" The authors hold that "the playwright today must seize upon new and vital content if the theatre is to be a living institution." When he does, he is told the actions and characters are not "typical." But a play, they think, must be more than a document, it must be a revelation; and "revelation—even of the most general truth—can be achieved only by dramatization of the special, the exceptional, the highly specific."

The Messrs. d'Usseau and Gow deny that the playwright should provide a solution for his "problem play." Their opinion is that it is enough to ask the question to bring it to attention; but "to present solutions is to recommend a program of action. As society is set up today, that's the function of the editorial writer and the political party." They see the theatre needing socially conscious artists; and they see no need for it to try to compete with Hollywood. The screen is barred by censorship "from much of the exciting world," and that is the place for the stage. The authors' preface is a forceful one. They weaken it a bit by growing specific about charges made against their own "Deep Are the Roots," but as they say, they believe in dramatizing only the exceptional. And "Deep Are the Roots" is that, even if not the whole way.

AUTHOR OF BOOKLET—Dr. Karla Longree, professor of foods and nutrition at Hampton Institute, is author of a booklet on the nutritive value of soy beans and peanuts. The booklet is being published by Hampton Press.

Negro Reading Matter

The letter of April 23 by Mabel Haden Todd concerning the lack of suitable books for colored children interested me very much. I wrote to one publishing house, inclosing a copy of her letter and received a prompt answer. It stated that quite a lot is being done by different publishers along these lines and listed several books on its current list, which are "neither fatuous nor condescending."

Perhaps the fault lies, not with the writers nor the publishers, but with the people responsible for choosing the school and library books which are put into the children's hands.

FRANCES P. WILKINSON.
Washington.

The Negro child's adjustment to his peculiar social conditions will surely not be aided one whit by any of that fabricated goo. Not from a white writer nor from a Negro of talent.

If these children are mentally old enough to get the "feel" of such characterizations, they will surely be mentally developed enough to sense that as far as they go child stars and the G-Men who roar through these films for the youngsters and some of the little blond youngsters? (The Negro youngster sits on the fringes of their neighborhoods on the edge of his seat and thrills to the pounding hoof-beats of his neighbor's favorite cowboy, and even identifies himself with this white person.) The Negro is the most thoroughly assimilated "foreigner" that educational system has produced. Persons who are advocating this kind? What about the Saturday movies? The horse operas, the

So they want these Negro youngsters to read about their country has produced. They are saying without reservation that to study together is to study each other.

CHARLES L. SAUNDERS.
Washington.

1946 9

Negro Book Club

Negro Book Club In Nationwide Annual Drive

Memphis Tribune

Dr. L. D. Reddick Contributes First Literary Feature

By JESSE WALKER

NEW YORK— (ANP) —Negro America is at last represented in the field of book clubs with the announcement this week of the formation of the Negro Book club devoted to books by and about Negroes and of special interest to them.

6-7-46-Jnls.

The club, under the leadership of its director, S. W. Garlington, and located at 501 W. 147th street, is currently launching a nationwide membership campaign through direct mail and newspaper advertisement. It intends to increase the book reading habits of America's 15,000,000 Negroes; especially those in cities of less than 100,000 population.

Memphis, Tenn.

TO PUBLISH CLUB NEWS

It intends to function like any of the other 26 book clubs in America and will publish a monthly Negro Book Club News which will feature a review of the club's monthly book selection, other reviews, a complete current listing of all books of specific interest to Negroes, a column on the people who write the books and what they are doing, a literary feature and will be available to members only.

In the first issue of the NBC News, Dr. L. D. Reddick, curator of the Shomburg Collection of Negro literature in the New York public library, will contribute the initial literary feature on the pros and cons of the need for a Negro Book club.

6-7-46-Jnls.

Membership in NBC is free to all charter subscribers to the NBC News, which is available for an initial fee of $1 for 12 issues. Along with the monthly book selection, which will be distributed to members at a cost at least 25 per cent less than the publisher's list prices, special benefits such as other book bargains will be offered, and special dividends will be given after two or more books are purchased.

Memphis Tenn.

BOOKS FOLLOW PAYMENTS

A distinctive feature of NBC is that unlike other book clubs it will not send members books until after payment for them is made, thus saving members the trouble of buying books they do not want, which is one of the deplorable faults of the book clubs functioning today.

The monthly selection of NBC may or may not be of a current book—since books concerning Negroes are not published every month. But, whenever that is the case a choice will be made from previous significant books on the Negro.

Negro Book Club

tured in the magazine in addition to book reviews are articles concerning the Negro by distinguished authors.

S. W. Garlington, director of the club, in making the announcement, said that the club seems to appeal to the people and "the response received is indicative of the need of such a club."

New Club Pushes Books By And About Negroes

Atlanta

NEW YORK — Books by and about Negroes will be publicized and circulated nationally by the newly-formed Negro Book Club, S. W. Garlington, director, announced this week.

Sat. 6-8-46

The club will publish a monthly news pamphlet featuring a review of the selections and other books, plus a complete listing of all books of specific interest to Negroes.

Dr. L. D. Reddick, curator of the Schomberg Collection, will write the first article on the need for such a club. Membership in NBC is free to all charter subscribers.

His Book Selected

The Afro-American

Baltimore, Md.

Sat. 6-15-46

GEORGE W. HENDERSON, whose new book, "Jule," has been selected by two book clubs for distribution, the One World Book Club and the Negro Book Club. His first novel, "Ollie Miss," written in 1935 was also a best seller.

'Really the Blues' Selected as Book of the Month by NBC

The Afro-American

Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—(NNPA)—The November seelction of the Negro Book Club, "Really the Blues," by Mezz Mezzrow and Bernard Wolfe, is called "the damndest book you will ever read."

It is the jazz-happy autobiography of a white man who chose to live as a colored man—even marrying a colored girl—and the writing is unusually frank and honest.

Sat. 11-23-46

The book illuminates the dance floor, the barroom, the jam session, and so forth, showing the part they have played in American history; is written in rich, racy, American idiom, and should be interesting not only to band leaders, juke-box fans and jitterbugs, but to scholars and sociologists as well.

New Book Club Memberships Held In 32 States

The Defender

Chicago Ill.

Sat. 7-27-46

NEW YORK—The Negro Book club, devoted exclusively to distribution of books by, and about Negroes, this week announced that the club already has charter members from 32 states in the union.

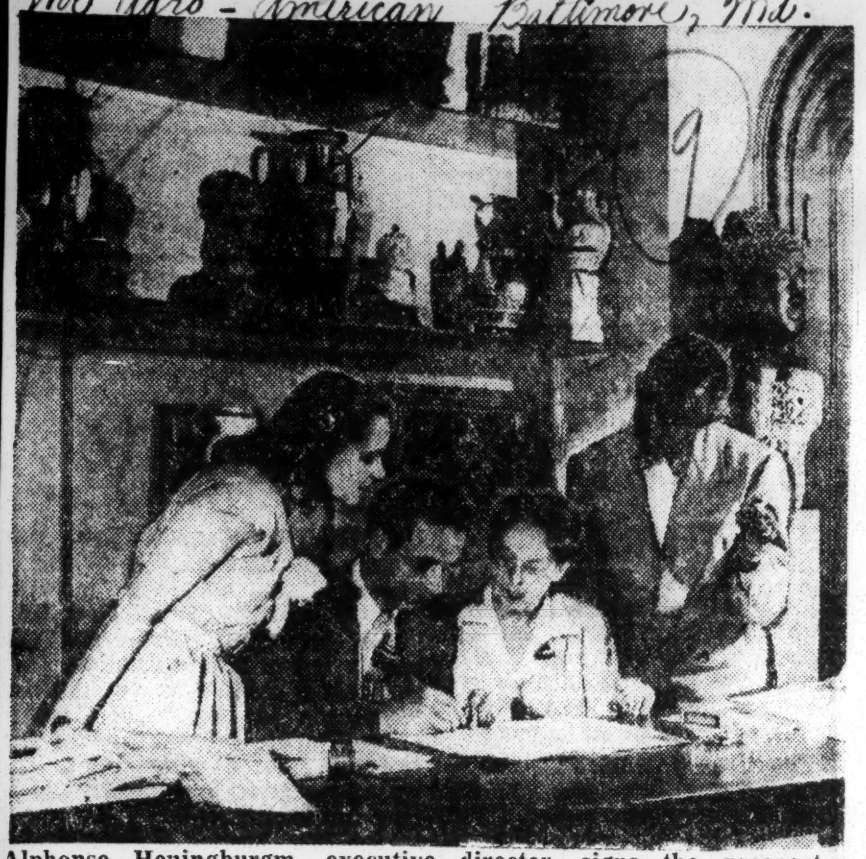
Formed June 1, the club immediately launched a drive to secure 1,000 charter subscribers. Members receive the NBC news, a monthly publication through the annual subscription fee of $1. Fea-

9 1946

One World Book Club

World Book Club Launched

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.



Alphonse Heningburgm, executive director, signs the prospectus which completes organization of One World Book Club in NYC. K. Aliki, famous Greek actress, and Mbonu Ojike, author of "My Africa," both standing, join Rolph Sues, author of "Shark's Fins and Millet" in studying program of the club. 8-10-46 Sat.

One World Book Club Set Up in New York

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—Announcement was made recently by Alphonse Heningburg, executive director of the One World Book Club, of the distribution of books touching the life and activities of minority groups in this country.

The club, chartered under New York State laws and incorporated at $100,000, is located at 227 W. 13th St. Its first offering will be George W. Henderson's new novel, "Jule," to be published in September. Sat. 8-10-46

Included among the club's advisory board members are:

Pearl S. Buck, Arna Bontemps, Edwin R. Embree, Lester B. Granger, George E. Haynes, Charles S. Johnson, Charles H. Wesley, and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Louis Adamic, K. Aliki, Francis J. Brown, Henrietta Buckmaster, Marguerite Cartwright, S. Chandrasekhar, Theodore H. Gaster, Mildred Countess of Gosford, Bryn J. Hovde, Emil Lengyel, Moonu Ojike, Harry A. Overstreet, and E. George Payne.

Selected By Book Club

Defender Chicago, Ill.

NEW YORK—(ANP)—"Southern Exposure" by Stetson Kennedy, which was given rave notices recently by Walter Winchell has been chosen the November selection of the One World Book club, an organization which features books by and about Negroes. Sat. 11-30-46

Mrs. Palmer's Honey (G.W.Carver Award)

St. Louis School Teacher Wins First Carver Award

Pittsburg Courier Pittsburg, Pa

2-16-46

NEW YORK—A distinguished audience of two-score literary folk were present in the Washington Square Room of the Fifth Avenue Hotel for luncheon last Wednesday when Mrs. Fannie Cook, a white school teacher of St. Louis, Mo., was presented with the first George Washington Carver Memorial Award of $2.500 for her outstanding novel of modern Negro life, "Mrs. Palmer's Honey," by Ken McCormick of Doubleday, Doran, the publisher.

Mrs. Cook, a white liberal, in accepting the award, spoke of the fine influence of liberal New York intellectuals on her and similarly-minded white people in her home city, and of her joy in working with the publisher, and especially with Bucklin Moon, chairman of the Carver Award Committee. "What you write and say," she remarked, "has often led to a change of view in St. Louis. We are learning to work together in many ways, and the way out for all of us is a problem of democracy. If we deprive ourselves of the services and contributions of one-tenth of our population, we all lose a great deal." She spoke of the great amount of slander regarding the Negro's ability and told of the efforts she has been making to get St. Louis newspapers to change the journalistic stereotype of the Negro. She especially decried the constant use of the word "Negro" in news stories. 2-16-46

CARVER MEMORIAL AWARD WINNER—Ken McCormick, editor-in-chief of Doubleday-Doran, presents a $2,500 check to Mrs. Fannie Cook, winner of the George Washington Carver Memorial Award for her novel, "Mrs. Palmer's Honey." Presentation was made in New York.—Stovall Photo.

WORKED NEARLY A YEAR

Speaking of her novel, on which she worked for the better part of a year, she said, "I have tried to give a rounded story of Honey—and I have known hundreds like her."

The novel deals with Negro workers in St. Louis and the influence of unionism and war work on their lives.

The George Washington Carver Memorial Award was announced in 1944, and "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" was regarded by the judges as "the most effective literary contribution to the Negro's place in American life." The award remains open indefinitely, and will be given by Doubleday whenever a full-length manuscript is judged worthy of this recognition. 2-16-46

NOTED WRITERS PRESENT

Present at the luncheon were: Miss M. Margaret Anderson, editor of Common Ground; Sterling Brown, professor of literature at Howard University; Dr. Melville Herskovits, professor of anthropology at Northwestern University; Dr. Lorenzo D. Turner, professor of literature at Fisk University; Owen Dodson, noted playwright; Isidor Schneider of the New Masses; Earl Conrad, Chicago Defender; Richmond Barthe, noted sculptor; Arthur Spingarn, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Constance Curtis, New York Amsterdam News; Mary Finger, New York Age; Donald Jones, field secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Also Henry Lee Moon, CIO Political Action Committee; Mrs. Henry Lee Moon; Earl Brown of Fortune magazine; Laurence D. Reddick, curator of the Schomburgh Collection, New York Public Library; Henrietta Buckmaster, noted novelist; Maxim Lieber, literary agent; Bucklin Moon, author of "The Darker Brother;" Edward L. Bernays, internationally famous public relations expert; George S. Schuyler, associate editor of The Pittsburgh Courier; James W. Ivy, assistant editor of The Crisis, and Joseph L. Wooten, interstate United Newspapers.

The Evolution of Honey Hoop

New York Times Magazine

MRS. PALMER'S HONEY. By Fannie Cook. 280 pp. New York: Doubleday & Co. $2.50.

By C. V. TERRY

New York

THE "Negro problem," as every one knows, is a declassé phrase today: Lillian Smith has reminded us more than once that it is a white problem now—and has been from the start, despite our American reluctance to face facts squarely. Like the dilemma of every minority group struggling for equality in a not-too-united world, it can only be solved within that larger framework—and Mrs. Cook drives the point home relentlessly in this uneven, but engrossing novel. "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" has just won the first George Washington Carver Award; its author (who happens to be white) is a St. Louis educator and social worker who obviously knows her milieu from the ground up.

Mrs. Cook has chosen the St. Louis "Ville" as her starting point—one of those towns-within-a-town, in this case a highly respectable Negro community, prospering mightily at war-work. Honey Hoop is her protagonist—a symbol of the Good Servant (always too busy to think) who has never really questioned her destiny. If her brother had not risen mightily in the CIO, if a handsome lieutenant had not come back from the wars to make his people socially conscious, Honey might have settled for security, and drifted into marriage with the prosperous proprietor of the Deceasement Home. The novel is really the story of her evolution—from a dazed plodder to a highly articulate American, determined to have her rights. Assisting in that metamorphosis are a swarm of minor characters, white and black—some of them far more vivid than Honey herself, all of them bursting with things to say. If their dialectic is usually better than their dialogue, it is always arresting.

Honey's story begins in 1943, when she forgets her factory job for a day to help her Mrs. Palmer over a Thanksgiving dinner crisis: it ends shortly after the 1944 election—which, the novel insists, was won by PAC with a decisive assist from Negro votes. Between we are given many glimpses of the tug-of-war behind the scenes: the Southern factory owner who will die for white supremacy, fluttery wives who *try* to like Negroes, canny union organizers who know that solidarity, without racial taboos, must be labor's slogan for tomorrow.

Sun 2-17-46

Some of Mrs. Cook's views will frighten the average white reader, but there is no denying the fact that she has chapter and verse for every point she makes. Democracy, she insists, is nothing the Negroes can "take by themselves":

> The common man has to seize that democracy and hold to it. It's his life preserver in a stormy sea. Who is the common man? You? Oh, no, brother, you're not the whole show! You call this the People's Building. You call everything Negro the People's This and That. You're not the people, you're just part. The common man is labor and Negroes and Jews and every other minority. We've got to work together. We've got to stop lining up with the enemy. We've got to know the enemy when we meet him. We've got to stop being the enemy!

Words like these are on many lips today. They might make an excellent antidote at the next Senate filibuster—if the Gentleman from Mississippi will yield the floor long enough to have them read into the record.

St. Louisan Goes to New York to Receive $2,500 Award for Book, 'Mrs. Palmer's Honey'

Post Dispatch St. Louis, Mo. 2-15-46

ST. LOUIS, — "Mrs. Palmer's Honey," a story of a Negro family with a St. Louis background, won for Mrs. Fannie Cook, white author of this city, the first George Washington Carver Memorial award of $2,500 in New York Thursday.

Doubleday, Doran and company offered the award in 1944 for the book ing the great scientist making the most effective contribution to the Negro's place in American life.

Mrs. Cook went to New York to receive the award. Art Center.

The novel outlines the Negro's struggle for opportunity and analyzes the forces which struggle social and political importance. It is the story of Honey Hoop, domestic employe who goes into war work and becomes a union member. Through her activities in the union, she shows how the Negro is slowly finding political means to break through ra-

"Mrs. Palmer's Honey" went on sale Thursday.

cial restrictions.

The writer's varied experiences among Negroes have given her the opportunity to make observations on the shrewd and wise study of conditions among the sharecroppers and the Delmo Homes project in southeast Missouri.

She is a member of the Mayor's Interracial Relations committee and the board of directors of the St. Louis N.A.A.C.P. and the Peoples'

Class and Color

Nation

SURELY if our literary people had their way there would be no anti-Negroism or anti-Semitism in this country. The American novelist's pen is firm, if not sharp, in defense of the minorities: at the moment I can recall only one novel of the last few years which formulated a reactionary position toward oppressed racial groups, and remarkably few instances where the instinct of intolerance showed itself even accidentally. Of patronage and condescension, of over-simplification and muddle-headedness and self-deception there has of course been an abundance; but no doubt the conscious process of reform must always be accompanied by these unattractive manifestations of missionary zeal.

In recent weeks there have been two new novels on the Negro problem—Fannie Cook's "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" (Doubleday, $2.50), winner of the George Washington Carver Award, and Ann Petry's "The Street" (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50), a Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship novel. I suppose I should say at once that neither of them challenges the prestige of Lillian Smith's "Strange Fruit"; indeed, neither of them is particularly rewarding as a work of fiction. But both novels have their interest, especially when they are read in conjunction. For there is as much provocation as irony in the fact that the far more cerebral of the two, "Mrs. Palmer's Honey," which undertakes to name the economic and political sources and cures of anti-Negroism, turns out to be really so simple compared to "The Street," which undertakes only to explain how its author, herself colored, feels about her situation.

Nation 3-9-46-SS.

There is no question that Mrs. Cook has thought hard and long in order to reach her conclusion that as labor goes, so goes the fate of the Negro. "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" is a civic-minded book not alone in terms of local affairs—housing, schools, community activities—but in terms of the large political life of the country. And Mrs. Cook is not lacking in the courage to proclaim her political preferences: a considerable section of her novel concerns the last Presidential campaign; she mobilizes her good Negroes to rally votes for Roosevelt and pleads without reservation the case for P. A. C. Indeed, it is specifically in the C. I. O. that she puts all her hopes for the solution of the Negro problem. But while recognizing such social and economic contradictions as segregation within the army and within the trade unions, she seems to will not to recognize any contradiction in Negroes themselves. Her characters, if they can be said to be motivated at all, are motivated only by positive or negative social impulses; there is no modification of feeling, no conflict of desires, once the path of action has been chosen. Thus, her heroine, Honey, is a parody of virtuousness, an Elsie Dinsmore of the kitchen, home, and trade union.

Nation

To find more human verisimilitude in Mrs. Petry's Lutie than in Mrs. Cook's Honey is not, however, to set up the one above the other as a social ideal. Mrs. Petry tells us the story of a young colored woman who, having lost her husband when the depression forced her to "live in" in domestic service, tries to make a decent life for herself and her small son in Harlem. Lutie is not only very pretty and energetic; she also has had a high-school education. The degradation she must suffer despite these advantages is symbolized by the dreadful apartment in which she must live, just as the whole of the Negro degradation is symbolized by the dirt and wretchedness of Harlem's 116th Street.

In her period of domestic service Lutie worked for a white family in Connecticut. By her own experience, her employers were a miserable family group—Mr. and Mrs. Chandler were unhappily married, Mr. Chandler drank, Mr. Chandler's brother shot himself before their eyes, the Chandler baby was a sad little youngster. But the Chandlers already had a lot of money and they were on their way to having a lot more; and Lutie had seen what a pleasant surface money can put on suffering. Her only complaint against being colored is that it denies her the opportunity to live with the cleanliness and financial ease of a Mrs. Chandler. No matter how hard she is willing to work, no matter what her talents, she is unable to rise above the Harlem ghetto.

New York,

By quite opposite routes, in other words, both novels have arrived at the economic core of the Negro problem. But to Mrs. Cook, equal economic opportunity is predicated on both Negro and white proletarian consciousness. To Mrs. Petry, equality of opportunity means a free capitalist economy in which the Negro individual, no less than the white, can gain as much as he desires and is capable of gaining.

N. Y.

I speak of Mrs. Cook's very thoughtful book as being, in the long run, rather simple compared to Mrs. Petry's. What I mean is that "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" fails to take into account the fact that is so frankly and unself-consciously admitted by "The Street"—namely, that class feelings are as firmly ingrained in the colored population of this country as in the white; that there is nothing inherently virtuous, from a political point of view or from any other point of view, about being a member of a mistreated minority. While Mrs. Cook's idealism on the score of class solidarity does credit to her, it asks, in the light of Mrs. Petry's straightforwardly middle-class document, to be corrected by a confrontation with our class realities. "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" also—and again in the light of "The Street"—calls attention to a profound but common error in so much of our contemporary political thinking, the error of assuming that it is only in the degree that people are virtuous that they deserve just treatment. Basic to a great deal of our writing on minority problems, especially in fiction, there seems to be the idea that we must prove that members of minority groups—whether Jews, Negroes, Italians, or whatever—are good, even better than the rest of us, before we have the right to demand that they be treated like everybody else. Must a white Protestant resident of Westchester be certified for character before he enjoys his full rights as a citizen? As I read "The Street," I couldn't help wondering whether the author of "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" would be as exercised over the inability of a girl like Lutie to achieve her house in Connecticut and even a mink coat, if that is what she wants, as over the restrictions in the path of a girl like Honey, whose ambitions are so much nobler. Properly, even politically, she of course should be.

DIANA TRILLING

SOFTLY BUT FIRMLY SPOKEN

MRS. PALMER'S HONEY, by Fannie Cook. Published by Doubleday; 280 pages, $2.50.

Birmingham News

We have had a great spate of books on the Negro question. A special interest has been aroused in fiction by Negroes dealing with the race problem. It has been suggested that people take to such books for the same reason that they read "Forever Amber" and "The Manatee"—because they dote on bawdiness. That is scarcely the case, we may be sure. But it is nevertheless true that only the poorest sort of literary work dealing with race relations fails to get a generous reception.

No such allowance need be made for "Mrs. Palmer's Honey," which is the story of Honey Hoop, a faithful servant of the Palmer family. She is about to become an old maid, although she is described as handsome and brown-skinned, when things begin to happen. Her employer, Mr. Palmer, is killed by a hard-drinking Negro, Snake, who is evidently symbolic of the rebellious attitude of Negroes. She in turn tries to kill Snake out of her sense of loyalty to white people who had been so kind to her. She begins to learn about the realities of the racial picture. And what she learns should have a profound effect on white readers, who are given an opportunity to see themselves and the whole social pattern in a new light.

Sat. 3.22-46

There is nothing strident in this novel. It is all the more telling for that reason. Professional Negroes will not care for the book, because it lacks the violent assertiveness which they relish. But, in its quiet way, "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" is likely to make an impression which "Black Boy" or "Strange Fruit" could not achieve. Here is something which the average Southern housewife who has had servant troubles, and who has despaired of the fidelity of Negroes, will understand, arriving at a discernment which should prove very helpful.

ala

This novel has received the George Washington Carver award. It deserves that recognition. It unfolds naturally and tellingly to embrace the whole checkered sphere of biracial relations. It is softly persuasive, but it does not lack strength on that account. There are several books in the same field which one might wish had never been published, but here is something which is at once true and tender, firm and full-visioned. Keep your eye on Fannie Cook.—S. J.

Out of the Kitchen--- Into CIO

Daily Worker

New York, N. Y.

MRS. PALMER'S HONEY. By Fannie Cook. Doubleday. 280 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by
JOHN NORCROSS

THE winner of the first George Washington Carver Award is a novel calculated to disentomb the restless ghost of art versus propaganda controversy. There have been so many pessimistic reports of bitterness and violence in interracial relations that the casual reader, if not the sociological student, is apt to get the impression that the prospect is one of unrelieved gloom.

Sun 4-28-46

Fannie Cook's engaging story of Honey Hoops, a handsome Negro girl who is emotionally attached to the Palmers through her long service as maid and confidante (with reservations), is a plausible and heartening one. Honey is transformed from "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" to "CIO's Honey" by a logical sequence of events bringing about an evolution in the girl's attitudes and concepts, and one who is familiar with the actual historical events Mrs. Cook had depicted is not likely to detect falsification of fact for the purpose of making an ideological point. It is about time for the reverse side of the Negro-white relations coin to be displayed. There is little that is Pollyannish or hollowly optimistic in Mrs. Palmer's Honey. Its good news can be verified by critics who will take the trouble to investigate.

9 1946

Mrs. Palmer's Honey (G. W. Carver Award)

Books of the Times

New York Times

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

TWO books about beautiful young Negro women were published yesterday. Ann Petry, author of the powerful and tragic story of Harlem, "The Street," is a Negro herself and writes from the inside about the life she knows. Fannie Cook, author of "Mrs. Palmer's Honey,"* is white and writes from the outside about a life she has taken considerable pains to find out about. The coincidence of their joint publication and similar subject-matter makes a comparison between these books inevitable. It is a comparison greatly in Miss Petry's favor. "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" is a distressingly clumsy demonstration of a thesis novel, a novel so overburdened with social indignation that it seems more like the minutes of a protest meeting than like a creative work of fiction.

Fannie Cook

"Mrs. Palmer's Honey" is the winner of the first George Washington Carver award, a prize intended to honor the memory of a great man and to publicize books about American Negroes. It is unfortunate that the prize is donated by a single publishing house and so is restricted to books submitted to that company. With two such notable books as "Black Metropolis," by St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, and "The Street" now on the nation's book counters, it seems a little grotesque to honor as undistinguished a book as "Mrs. Palmer's Honey."

2-8-46

An Effort to Dramatize Injustices

Fannie Cook is a member of the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations in St. Louis and an adviser to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. She knows a great deal about the injustices to Negroes caused by discrimination and segregation and she cares greatly about them. Her novel is an effort to dramatize those injustices so that her readers will care, too. In so far as Mrs. Cook has added once again to the record an account of congested housing, restricted job opportunities, social insults and all the consequent bitterness and resentment in Negro hearts, her book is informative, in much the same way as is an article in The Nation. But it reads like such an article.

Honey Hoop lived in the Negro district of St. Louis known as "the Ville." She worked in an airplane plant helping produce planes for "the white folks' war." She was beautiful, intelligent, kindly and responsible. For years she had been the mainstay of her family, her fourteen brothers and sisters, her many nieces and nephews. Until she got her war job Honey had been cook in the family of Matthew Palmer, a wealthy citizen and idealist prominent in liberal causes, particularly Negro causes. Among white people Honey was always spoken of with envy as Mrs. Palmer's Honey.

*MRS. PALMER'S HONEY. By Fannie Cook. 280 pages. Doubleday. $2.50.

2-8-46

Her Characters Crude Puppets

How Honey's defeatist attitude in regard to the race problem was cured is the theme of Miss Cook's story. Honey knew all there was to know about white contempt as demonstrated in the conversation of the Palmers' friends and the near riots of "poor white trash." She knew what hatred could do to make a man she might have loved turn evil and vicious. She knew about the need of leadership, organization, agreement and hope among the Negroes themselves. Until her dreamy, younger brother became a union organizer for the CIO, Honey had not found an answer. But, when she saw what her brother's new-found faith could do for him, when she saw the perfect democracy, the noble brotherhood, the fraternal idealism of the CIO, her life took on new meaning and significance.

It all became as clear as revelation. The Negro's fate was part of the labor movement. The CIO offered Negroes equality. The CIO was for Roosevelt, who was for the common man, including Negroes. Therefore Negroes had an obvious duty: to support the CIO with all their might, to canvass for the PAC until their shoes wore out, to vote Democratic in spite of the Southern Democrats. Honey was never to know doubt any more.

Miss Cook has written Honey's story as if it were a diagram illustrating points A, B and C. The characters are the crudest of puppets. White people represent various kinds of vicious race prejudice, with a few honorable exceptions among the CIO members and the younger generation. Negroes represent various reactions to the race problem, moral collapse, hypocritical blindness, patient fortitude and generous crusading zeal. Most of the characters talk about only one subject, the race problem, whether they are white or black. And most of them talk as if they were making stump speeches. 2-8-46

That Honey and her friends should accept a drastic oversimplification of complicated social, political and economic problems is natural. But Miss Cook oversimplifies, too. She writes as if she believes that Republicans, conservative Democrats, business men, society women and poor white trash are all united in a sort of informal conspiracy to persecute Negroes. No wonder "Mrs. Palmer's Honey" fails as fiction and is not very impressive as a social document.

AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

A 'Honey' Of An Author Speaks Up

Chicago Defender

By EARL CONRAD
(Defender New York Bureau)

NEW YORK—"The forces are gathering. Tactfully, behind the scenes, they are gathering."

It was five or six weeks ago when Mrs. Fannie Cook of St. Louis, winner of the George Washington Carver Memorial Award of $2,500, for her novel, "Mrs. Palmer's Honey," told me that. Then, as if to confirm her statement, the reactionary forces she was speaking of struck. They struck in Columbia, in Freeport, N. Y., and repeatedly in incidents in the South.

Mrs. Cook, an astute, political observer, was able to see and feel the supremacist forces marshaling their strength, making ready to swoop down on Negro communities, split the Negro away from white labor. She was concerned about it. She was concerned about what labor and the Negro would do to counter this assault.

Speaking to me at the offices of her publishers, Doubleday and Co., on the Life and Time Building, she told me that this was the concern that underlay her novel of Honey Hoop, the domestic servant who became transformed from Mrs. Palmer's Honey to the CIO's Honey.

Jul 13-16-46

College Experience

Mrs. Cook, a woman in her forties, very intelligent of manner, seemed a little tense as I talked with her, and it was not remarkable, for, right after our meeting she was to go to a Fifth Ave. hotel where, at a dinner in her honor, she would receive her award.

For a half hour before the dinner she talked of how she had approached the Negro issue, of her work in St. Louis, of conditions regionally and nationally.

There is an interesting story in most whites who find identification with the Negro's struggle and hers is interesting.

She told me how, once, when she was a senior at the University of Missouri, she was brought sharply into contact with the oppressive condition of Negroes.

A young man whom she knew well, a houseboy at her home, was accused of doing something which he had not done. "I did everything I could to save him," she related, "but the man was sent to jail."

Dies In Jail

Later he was paroled in her custody and in the custody of two other St. Louis parties. Mrs. Cook was away for a time and it was necessary for the man to report to the others. He knew Mrs. Cook well, but was reluctant, apparently, to report to the others, and these people, fearing the possible loss of bond they had placed for him, had him sent back to jail.

Back in prison he died of tuberculosis while still in his twenties. Mrs. Cook never forgot that episode. It stayed with her, made her observe conditions closer to the Negro group, preyed upon her until she found herself "white" and where she would receive her award.

Describes St. Louis

"You have to live the stories you write," she explained. And Mrs. Cook's book does reveal that she has been closely associated with the Negro group.

Thoughtfully, she observed, "You can't live and see all this, without it hurting you. When I see Negro girl is and has been pretty hopeless. Then if a Negro girl they can't get into restaurants, I goes into industry, things change. feel it deeply enough inside so I've seen the world open up for that I can't keep quiet about it these kids." and have to do something about it."

Once a Negro woman sent her to visit sharecroppers. She organized a committee for the rehabilitation of sharecroppers, and these people when she is still chairman of that group.

She learned a great deal in that work, and it led her toward the discovery of the Negro question as a vital aspect of the democratic fight.

In St. Louis she became active with the NAACP, the Urban League, the Public School Committee of the League of Women Voters—and the Urban League character and capabilities.

Speaking of St. Louis as "a Northern city with a Southern exposure," she said, "We are cheating ourselves of the abilities of these people when we bar them," she said. "Even to me at the offices of my publishers

'Really the Blues' really ridiculous

REALLY THE BLUES, by Milton (Mezz) Mezzrow and Bernard Wolfe (Random House, $3).

By Eddie Condon
Guitarist and band leader

PM New York, N.Y.

THIS little gem on adult delinquency is being blurbed by the publishers as "an authentic human document . . . the odd Odyssey of an old-time, jail-happy jazzman who spiked beer for Al Capone, smoked opium with the Purple Gang, peddled marihuana in Harlem (the law got him for that, too), played the clarinet in dives high and low, married across the color line and today heads a jazz record company!" Sat. 11-3-46

However, it took me exactly four minutes to decide that the book is trashy and inaccurate and, as such, should sell a hundred thousand copies at least. The Hollywood reaction will be typical.

As far as book reviewing goes, it isn't so much a matter of reviewing the book – as of reviewing Mezz.

The average reader will probably fall for this stuff. Knowing the perpetrator as long as I have, I'm quite certain that everyone mentioned in the book will think it is just as ridiculous as I think it is.

As for that watermelon accent, it should be a source of embarrassment to the colored race. When I first knew Mezz, he had a Gellis dialect. Now he talks just like Al Jolson. Concerning the book's inaccuracies – well, they must be unconscious, subconscious or cocainized. Nobody could have that many hop dreams without consulting Freud, De Quincey and Rudolph Hess.

When it comes to the part about Mezz teaching jazz stars, from Gene Krupa to Louis Armstrong, how to play their respective instruments, said stars will probably find that *Really the Blues* tears very easily.

Musically and socially

On pages 159 and 160 Mezzrow says: "Gene was my protégé. . . . I'd wised him up to everything I knew about the colored man's drum technique, including things I'd got from Zutty Singleton and Baby Dodds that I'd promised Dave Tough I'd never show to anybody else on this earth. And I'd spent a lot of time coaching Joe Sullivan too, giving him little hints I'd picked up from Tony Jackson, Earl Hines and all the other great Negroes who had ever grabbed a handful of keys."

Later, Mezz says, he "felt hot" about the way Tough left and cut out for Paris. So – even though he'd promised Dave he'd never "show jazz drumming secrets to another living soul" – he up and showed Krupa the whole works. He says he also gave professional help to Bix Beiderbecke, Frank Teschemacher, Fats Waller and other talented musicians who I doubt would have talked to Mezz musically. Socially? I don't know. But I'd be surprised if any of them were ever in the same penitentiaries as Mezz.

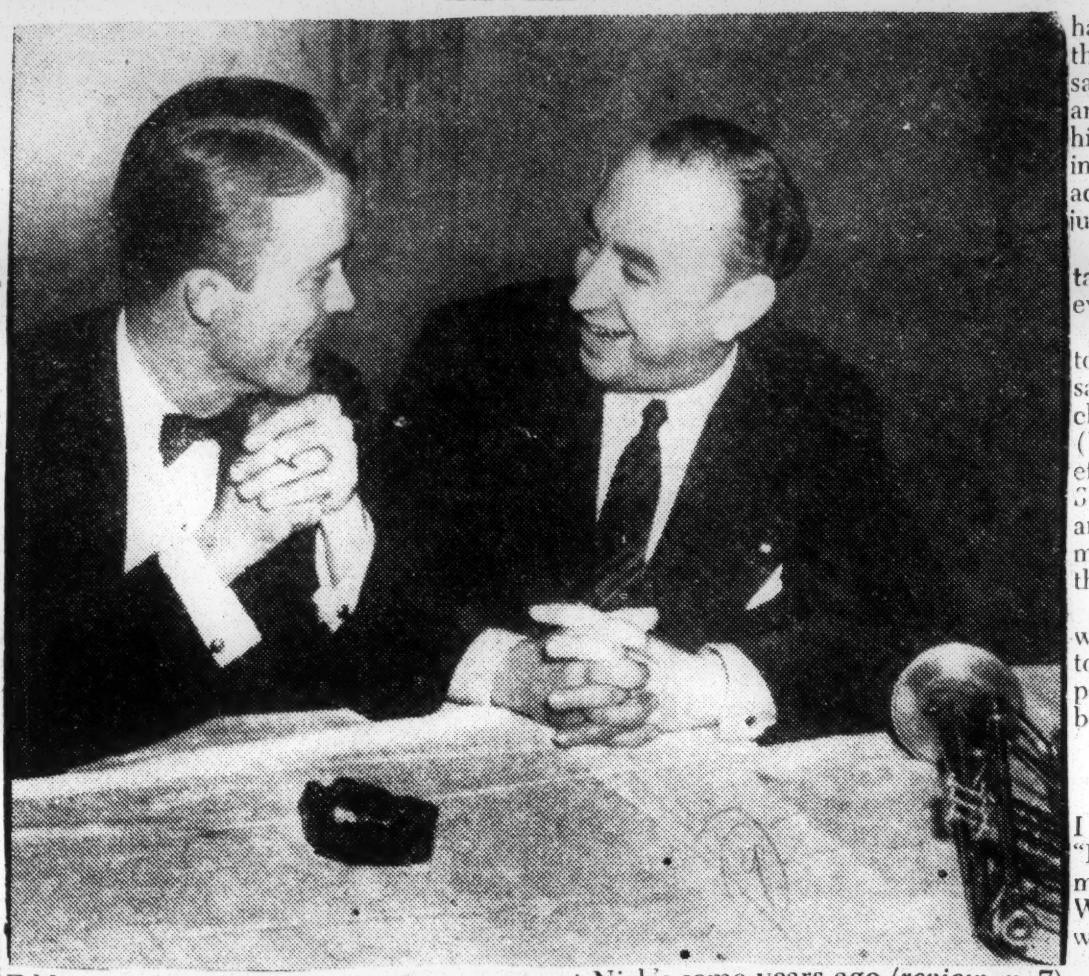
As far as the publishers of this book are concerned, it's fortunate that they didn't decide to record actual music, as well as stories, by this author. When Bernard Wolfe, Mezz's ghost-of-a-chance, undertook this job, he must have been hungrier than Mezz.

As for the penal institutions which Mezz refers to, I'm sure they must all be highly chagrined out at Hart's Island and various other pleasure spots. As for the Purple Gang, Legs Diamond and the brothel set, I predict that Polly Adler will definitely sue and that the Capone mob will picket Womrath's.

Now, coming to those hand-done musical arrangements that Mezzrow did for Armstrong and other geniuses. Ouch. When Mezz plays the clarinet and the saxophone, please send me to Pontiac. He hasn't even got a chance to tune up.

All I can say is that, when a guy who plays as questionably as Milton Mezzrow criticizes boys like Teschemacher and Bix, the stuff must be strong.

On page 210 Mezz tells how, up on 125th Street, they called him "the Reefer King, the Link Between the Races, the Philosopher, the Mezz, Poppa Mezz, Mother Mezz, Pop's Boy, the White Mayor of Harlem, the Man About Town, the Man That Hipped the World, the Man That Made History, the Man With the Righteous Bush, He Who Diggeth the Digger and Father Neptune."



Eddie Condon and Milton Mezzrow, seen at Nick's some years ago (*review, p.* 7)

More mental than technical

But, to musicians, he sounds more like Amos and Andy. Especially when he writes such slop as appears on page 353:

"I never believed that you had to practice and study a hell of a lot to play real New Orleans. The secret is more mental than technical. If you want to play real jazz, go live close to the Negro, see through his eyes, laugh and cry with him, soak up his spirit.

"That's the best way to prepare for a recording. It's what I always do. If you're not prepared to do that, then okay, play your own music, but don't pretend that it has anything to do with jazz. Make up a new name for what you're doing, just to keep the record straight. But, if you're humble enough and strip off all the prejudices that are a barrier between you and the source, you'll make it. It takes a lot of living and loving, among the right people The rest comes easy."

Mezz says it's taken him 30 years, but he thinks maybe he's finally made it. "All my life I've been striving for those weaving patterns that Jimmy Noone and Johnny Dodds and Sidney Bechet left imbedded in my skull, and I think I've finally gotten pretty close to them. If I have, it's only because I spent my life fighting to get back to the source.

"It wasn't any special talent in me. I didn't have any more gifts than a lot of those Chicago boys. It was only a mental attitude, an instinct that steered me right."

When playing good music gets to be a social accomplishment that you get from hanging out with Mezz on The Corner, then I'll start selling ties. On page 147 he says that, these days, Gene Krupa has gone and forgotten how Poppa Mezz taught him to drum. But Mezz has been socializing in some pretty strange basements, according to the book. So, maybe, Gene just lost his address.

On pages 264 and 265 Mezz says, in talking of "New Orleans style" (whatever that is):

"Flares were always in the right places, to help build up the pulse, and we always saw to it that the chords we called 'belly-chords' came in where they belonged. (You'll find some good examples of this effect in the record I made a little later, *Swingin' with Mezz*, where, in one place, an A seventh appears in the key of B-flat, making an abrupt change that hits you in the belly like a shot of good brandy.)"

As for the "flares," I'll skip them. But, with the liquor shortage what it is, I'd like to investigate that new chord with the imported 84-proof kick. That one ought to be good

It's new to Eddie

As for his dialogue, it's all new to me. I never heard Negroes talk like this: "Boy, you is the saxophonest, blowinest man I ever heard in all my born days. Where did you come from, poppa?" Nowhere outside of Octavus Roy Cohen.

On page 256 Mezz says that once Armstrong, after playing the lead passage with one of Mezz's orchestrations, "tore his horn away from his lips, came running over to me bubbling with joy and exclaimed 'From now on Mezz is my musical director!' " Then he goes on: "The tension in that room snapped like an overstretched elastic band." Well, something must have snapped, that's sure, when that happened.

In another spot Mezz tells how Critic John Hammond, on a record date, called him into the control room and said earnestly, "Mezz, you shouldn't have brought Bechet on this date. The two of you play so much alike that there won't be any contrast."

If John said that in any seriousness, he must have been tone-deaf at the time. And, as for Sidney Bechet—I don't think he's started to write a book about the kind of music he plays. But when he does, I'll be a customer. Sat. 11-3-46

Some history, too

In some spots Mezz forgets and tells some history. I saw a passage on page 349, for instance, that I certainly can't deny. In talking about a record called *Baby, Won't You Please Come Home?*, made for Brunswick, Mezz says:

"The third chorus is Eddie Condon's vocal monstrosity, probably the worst singing effort in the whole history of recorded jazz. This miscarriage led Brunswick's own critic, when he was writing the notes for a Tesch album in 1945, to say that this recording is 'notable for one of the worst vocal choruses in the history of recording. . . .' "

Well, that's the truth. But Mezz didn't tell all of it. He should have gone on to expose that other vocal ulcer of mine called *I'm Sorry I Made You Cry*. That was even worse, and all I can say is I'm Sorry I Made That Record.

The story of Milton Mezzrow should be an interesting one. I hope he doesn't try sometime to write it again.

First Cat: Hello Mezz, have you got any marijuana?

Mezz: Plenty, old man, my pockets are as full as a factory hand's on payday.

First Cat: Let me have three cigarettes [50 cents' worth].

Mezz: I sure will, slotmouth [racial talk for big mouth].

First Cat: . . . Friend, this marijuana of yours is terrific, I'm going home and listen to that new record Louis Armstrong made for what they said:

This was Harlem talk, in a time when jazz and marijuana were cutting a new pattern of life. Mezzrow, a jazz musician, born in Chicago of Russian-Jewish parents, had come to New York full of fire for New Orleans music and the Negroes who made it, was selling marijuana is a ("gauge") to his reefer-smoking customers ("vipers"). In plain English, this is up, Okeh . . .

10-28-46 PM

his gauge, and the vipers are coming up, one by one:

First Cat: Hey there Poppa Mezz, is you anywhere?

Mezz: Man I'm down with it, stickin' like a honky.

First Cat: Lay a trey on me, ole man.

Mezz: Got to do it, slot.

First Cat: . . . Jim, this jive you got is a ing up on The Corner—131st Street and gasser, I'm goin' up to my dommy and Seventh Avenue, Harlem. He's pushing dig that new mess Pops laid down for

Vipers, Tea, and Jazz. Milton Mezzrow, alias Mezz Mezzrow is standIt's 1929, and

for the Okeh company . . .

Pretty or not, this is just a sample of the life Mezzrow led from the time he learned to play the saxophone at Pontiac Reformatory when he was 16 years old. With the collaboration of Bernard Wolfe, a jazz fan and free-lance writer, Mezz, now 46, has written a book about that life and the music and marijuana and opium which colored his days and haunted his nights. "Really the Blues" is what he calls it, and what Thomas De Quincey did in "The Confessions of an English Opium Eater" in the early nineteenth century, Mezzrow has most certainly brought up to date.

Because of its clinical frankness and brutal honesty, "Really the Blues" may not sit well with a great many people. For a small thing, the style is so heavily peppered with jive talk that it sometimes sounds forced. But the biggest cause for alarm could be that kids are obsessed by jazz, and if this is how jazz was born, parents may wish the world had stayed with madrigals. If the jazz era as Mezzrow describes it actually is dead, then "Really the Blues" is an American documentary. If it is still with us, nobody can read the book and claim ignorance.

Alger Upside Down: Mezzrow grew up with almost all of jazz's legendary great. He learned his music from men like Joe (King) Oliver, Sidney Bechet, Clarence Williams, Jimmy Noone, and Louis Armstrong. He was around when Bix Beiderbecke was at his greatest. The trouble with Bix, he thinks, is that the great cornetist strayed away from the pure idiom and got too conscious of "serious" modern music. "He should have kept his dirty socks on," Mezz says, "and never started sleeping between sheets." Of Bessie Smith, the greatest blues singer of them all, he remembers that "when she was in a room her vitality flowed out like a cloud and stuffed the air till the walls bulged."

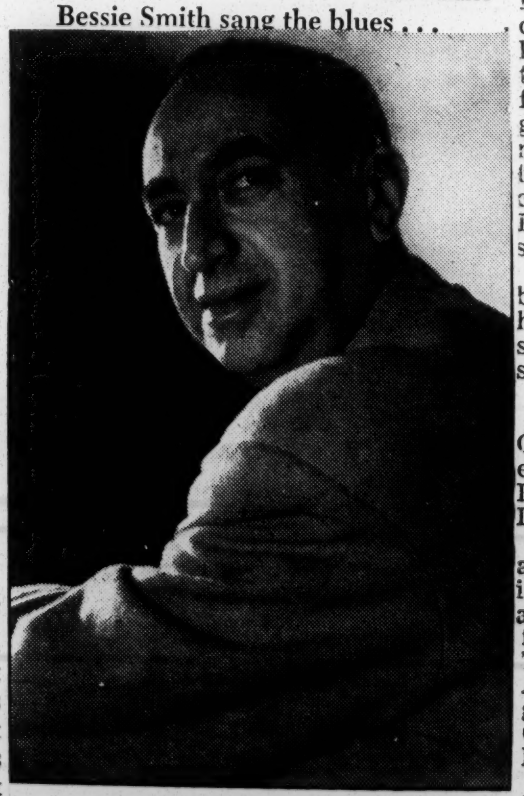
Mezz learned to smoke marijuana from a "flashy, sawed-off runt of a jockey named Patrick. The first thing I noticed was that I began to hear my saxophone as though it was inside my head . . . All the notes came easing out of my horn like they'd already been made up, greased and stuffed into the bell." (Medical experiments have shown that marijuana addicts get no real help from their "tea." They merely imagine they are playing better.)

There is one point Mezzrow wants to make, however. "I never advocated that anybody should use marijuana, and I sure don't mean to start now . . . I laid off five years ago . . . I know of one very bad thing the tea can do to you—it can put you in jail." As for Mezzrow's four years in a Harlem opium den, they nearly cost him his life. And nobody who reads his racking account of the cure he took would ever want to taste the dubious joys of the poppy pipe and hop-pad.

For one thing or another, Mezzrow did one term in the reformatory and two in jail. "Every time I got in trouble, it was because I strayed away from the music. Whenever I latched on solid to the music, I flew right." And that is the moral to "Really the Blues," the confessions of a "real American success story, upside down: Horatio Alger standing on his head."

Nat Nazarro

Bessie Smith sang the blues . . .



. . . Mezzrow lived them, brutally

Book Reviews

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

by J. Saunders Redding

("REALLY THE BLUES," by Milton Mezzrow and Bernard Wolfe. Random House. 388pp., Appendices, Index., $3.)

The blurb on the inside back cover of "Really The Blues" says, The Blues" is the damndest book.

Now, book blurbs seldom tell the truth about what's on the inside, but this one does. Really "'The Blues' is the damndest book." Sat. 11-9-46

Reading its crowded and somewhat hysterical pages is an exciting venture. I do not mean that it is a literary adventure: there is nothing aesthetic about it and nothing involved and nothing exploratory. But, as the authors themselves would put it, the book has "kicks."

"Really The Blues" is the biography of a Jewish-American jazz musician named Milton Mezzrow. He was born on Chicago's Northwest side, a bad neighborhood where at fifteen he got into a trouble that sent him up to the Boys' Reformatory at Pontiac. This was his school.

Life Changed

Here he got his first taste of both jazz and colored people. Together they changed his life.

"By the time I reached home," he tells us after serving his time, "I knew I was going to spend all my time from then on sticking close to Negroes. They were my kind of people. And I was going to learn their music and play it for the rest of my days. I was going to be a musician, a Negro musician, hipping the world about the blues the way only Negroes can. I didn't know how the hell I was going to do it, but I was straight on what I had to do."

How Mezzrow did it makes the book. It will occur to many that he did it the hard way, and that some of the doing was unnecessary.

Smoked Opium

He did it by working for Al Capone, by going to jail, by listening to Bessie Smith and Alberta Hunter and Florence Mills in the De Luxe Cafe at 35th and State.

He learned to use marihuana, and he smoked opium with the infamous Purple Gang in Detroit, and he teamed up with men now famous as exponents of jazz — Teddy Wilson, Gene Krupa, Louis Armstrong, Red Nichols, Jack Teagarden, Sidney Bechet, Eddie Condon, Fats Waller, a list too long to enumerate.

Mezz Mezzrow, who periodically lived in an opium haze (once for four years!), played his saxophone and clarinet with these men, or arranged music for them, or just floated with them from one job to another.

Became Colored

He married colored. He became so completely colored that his draft card read: "Milton Mezzrow; Height, 5'10"; Weight, 165; Race, Negro . . ."

Before one gets a third through "Really The Blues," one gets the impression that the book is important in spite of the idiom in which it is written and in spite of (and partly because of) the degradation of many of the lives it records.

It is important because it deals with a period of American life the contemporary recorders of which, with the notable exception of Scott Fitzgerald, are essentially jazz musicians.

The two decades between 1918 and 1938 will come alive to the future historian, I believe, not through the dusty pages of scholarly tomes, but in the stories of Fitzgerald, in the music of the period, and in the lives of the period's musicians.

Certainly one of the first things those future historians will need to read is "Really The Blues."

Biography in Jive

The Times Book Review

REALLY THE BLUES. By Mezz Mezzrow and Bernard Wolfe. 388 pp. New York: Random House. $3.

New York, N.Y.

By CHARLES POORE

"REALLY THE BLUES" is a singular venture into the lower depths of drug addiction and the upper heights of jazz music. It is the clinically frank autobiography of a widely known jazz musician who learned to play the saxophone in a reformatory, sold marijuana in Harlem, worked for the Capone gang, served time on Riker's Island, became a drug addict, reformed and backslid and reformed again, but never ceased to give his main efforts to his music. Though some libraries may be inclined to keep the book over there on the restricted shelves, and with reason, it contains a good deal of material on the history of jazz in America. Sun. 11-3-46

When an anthropologist and musicologist said that Mr. Mezzrow's recordings went way back to the very roots of music, "to the slave snips and the dance music of the inland Ashanti and the canoe songs of the Wolof and Mandingo along the Senegal River" that seemed good enough for him. He was particularly pleased because—though he is white—he had long since decided to live as a Negro. Then one day when he was playing at a jam session in Greenwich Village Bernard Wolfe, a writer with no training in music, decided that he would like to do a magazine article about Mr. Mezzrow. At the end of two years of working together they had a book.

The story, told in the first person, is rather hard to read because in spite of the best efforts of the collaborators a bit of it is technical, a lot of it seems repetitious and a lot of it is written in jive idiom. (A glossary helps, but it isn't easy to keep turning from glossary to text.) Mr. Mezzrow makes out a case for the importance and validity of jive talk that would impress the Gilbert Seldes of "The Seven Lively Arts" days and should call for a new edition of Eric Partridge's "Dictionary of Slang," not to mention Mr. Mencken's "The American Language." But when he quotes T. S. Eliot you feel that he is wearing Mr. Wolfe's clothing.

Books of the Times

The Times New York, N.Y.

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

THEY raise two kinds of Governors in Georgia, the Gene Talmadge variety, of whom most decent and intelligent Georgians are thoroughly ashamed, and the Ellis Arnall variety, of whom those same decent and intelligent Georgians are so rightly proud. Today, when the attention of nearly every literate person in America is concentrated on politics, is the singularly appropriate publication day for a political book by Mr. Arnall, "The Shore Dimly Seen."

Ellis G. Arnall

Ellis Gibbs Arnall is only 39, but already he has won for himself a national reputation as one of the ablest and most intelligently idealistic figures in the Democratic party. In addition to his executive ability and his manifest sincerity he is extraordinarily widely informed, highly articulate and apparently ambitious. Since Georgia Governors cannot succeed themselves in office he will soon be out of a job. But that he will be heard from again in Washington as well as in Georgia seems predestined. His book should be of substantial assistance to his career.

"The Shore Dimly Seen" is a personal and informal account of Mr. Arnall's achievements as Governor and a discussion of both Southern and national problems. It is written in an amusing variety of manners, with a surprising literary grace in isolated passages, with brisk competence and frequently with all the fustian of a campaign speech. Mr. Arnall can indulge in aberrations of prejudice and can stoop to unworthy "politicking" with the best of them. But he does so with a guileless air as if his tongue were in his cheek which is quite disarming.

He's a Thoroughly Loyal Democrat

One does not believe that he believes every word set down in "The Shore Dimly Seen." Even Mr. Arnall would probably admit that he has carried party loyalty about as far as it can go when he refers to the Democrats, "whose party for more than 140 years has been the vehicle of good government, prosperity, progress and purity." Surely he must have been smiling when he wrote down that "purity" without even putting quotation marks around it. And his repeated sneers at Boston, that "festering mudpuddle," can only be attributed to an unreasonable obsession.

"There is nothing wrong with government today that a good dose of democracy cannot cure," says Mr. Arnall. The dose he personally administered to the State Government of Georgia was powerful and effective. Among its ingredients were these: elimination of the poll tax, a clean-up of the educational system and a restoration of academic freedom, a refinancing and economy program that completely paid off the State debt, drastic penal reforms, the drafting and adoption of a new Constitution and the passage of a youth suffrage amendment, "the teen-age voting bill," which reduced the voting age to 18, the fighting age. Wed. 11-6-46

"I am convinced," says Mr. Arnall, "that somehow we can make America free of fear and want. And keep it free from boredom and monotony, too." How we are to accomplish this he outlines at some length according to his own political philosophy. Mr. Arnall says that he is a democrat with a little "d." He is a loyal New Dealer, too, but a moderate one on the whole. He approves "planning, but not a planned economy." He detests fascism and all its American manifestations; and he opposes Marxism with considerably more conviction than the extreme leftists of his party.

Dislikes Railroads and Monopolies

The one single factor in American life which raises Mr. Arnall's blood pressure most frequently is the discriminatory freight rates of the railroads, which make "Colonial areas" of the South and West. This policy, which he has opposed with vigor all the way to the United States Supreme Court, is a national disaster, he thinks, as well as being illegal and unethical. But it is about what he would expect of railroads, which "undoubtedly lag behind every other enterprise in the country in efficiency." His dislike of great monopolies is only a little less violent.

Mr. Arnall believes that industry must be decentralized for the benefit of the South and West; that Federal funds must be spent according to local needs and not only according to the ability of localities to match the expenditure; that a public works system must be ready to go into action in emergencies; that soil conservation and the elimination of one-crop farming are No. 1 priority problems; that the best opportunities for Negroes lie in the Southeast and not in Northern cities or in the Black Belt or Delta, and that we must have a more democratic foreign policy. He is a little vague about the last, but seems conventionally "liberal."

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"He tells about his career, his political experience, in order to point his moral. He offers a program which is not novel, but which is nonetheless a good path for the emergence of the South into its own. He is against colonialism, because he wants both our material and human resources to be conserved for our own benefit. He is a supporter of free enterprise, but he objects to discriminations like freight rate differentials, he is against monopolistic conspiracies, he wants to see control of corporate enterprises restored to ownership. Birmingham, Ala.

"He has a sense of humor which pervades his writing just as his Georgia drawl pervades his spoken speech. For example: 'The most dangerous present menace to American business is not a handful of pinkish dissenters from our economic orthodoxy, but the erection of an irresponsible bureaucracy of management, more involuted and pernicious than any governmental bureaucracy ever to haunt the nightmare of a high-tariff Republican.' Arnall sees the world from the vantage point of Newnan, Ga., and offers his advice with the accent of a small-town man who has thought his way through to a creative outlook.

"He has read deeply and remembers what he has read. Those who listened to the 'Information Please' program which was broadcast from Atlanta during the war must have been struck by both the quickness and the richness of his mind. Arnall was the star of the evening. He must have been reared among books. He quoted poetry in a way which made him the peer of experts like John Kieran and Franklin P. Adams. He is the only Southerner in office who can be described as the scholar in politics. He is a spokesman for the human spirit in public affairs." Sat. 12-7-46

There is little that can be added to the foregoing, except a plea to thoughtful Southerners to make sure of reading the book. The progressive movement in the South has had many mouthpieces, but none to show Arnall's balance combined with Arnall's courage and Arnall's eloquence. There is no trace in him of the rasping quality of a Tom Watson or the knee-bending of quieter Southern liberals. He is of a piece. If he does not go so far as some might wish, he goes far enough to make plain the road to this region's salvation. What he has to say has an even wider meaning. "The Shore Dimly Seen" establishes Arnall's stature as a national figure of light and lead-

ELLIS ARNALL'S MESSAGE

The Times

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The Nation New York, N.Y.

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Arnall's book is discursive, wandering far afield from the author's own home town of Newnan into a world that exists as the author clearly understands it must, in the Newnan

Which Leads In Intolerance—Birmingham, Ala., or Mass.?

World Aug. 12, 20-46

BOSTON—(ANP)—The question of whether Massachusetts or Georgia leads in racial intolerance and the keenness of the interests in their wide ra... Governor Arnall is a believer in democracy: "T... if they are informed, is ... He is, of course, a born... since Jefferson, Mason, Ja... velt were of that party... Roosevelt belonged in it, ... himself as a middle-of-th... most abhors, and is the h... most abhors, and is the recent election? Boston's population is predomi-

Asked why he singled out Boston for criticism in his book, Gov. Arnall said, "The people in Boston look down their noses, ban... cooks and treat the South as ... nantly Irish and Jewish and traditionally Democratic—yet it voted Republican. Could that happen in Georgia?

Sat. 11-30-46

The Shore Dimly Seen

Books of the Times

The Times New York, N.Y.
Wed. 11-6-46

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World Rev. Dec 12, 20-46
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tion of whether Massachusetts or
Georgia leads in racial intolerance
views about each state by Geor-
gia's Gov. Arnall and Ex-Gov.
followed criticism of Boston, which
last week. The verbal exchange
appeared in Gov. Arnall's recent
book, "The Shore Dimly Seen."
Curley, who is now mayor of
Boston, said last Wednesday that
Southerners are apparently still
living in Civil War days. "Arnall
thinks he's commanding a com-
pany of dragons in the Civil War.
How about the recent election?
Boston's population is predomi-
nantly Irish and Jewish and tradi-
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though it were a barbarian land. Boston is the recognized seat of intolerance in the U. S."

This last sentence nettled Curley somewhat, for he retorted, "The only thing Boston won't stand is a lynching. If that's what Gov. Arnall means, you can tell him we're very intolerant of lynching up here."

Hopes of the South As Seen By Arnall

The Courier-Journal
Louisville, Ky.

A Review by Tarleton Collier

Sun. 11-17-46

THE SHORE DIMLY SEEN: By Ellis Gibbs Arnall. 312 pp. J. B. Lippincott. $3.

Government can be dynamic. To match the needs of the complex social and economic structure of modern existence, it will have to be dynamic and purposeful or else give way to forms that are abhorrent to Americans. This is the way Georgia's young Governor sees it, and this is the light by which his administration has been guided.

"The Shore Dimly Seen" is his book, telling the story of the reforms accomplished by his administration. But it tells more than that. It describes the objectives of his effort in Georgia as the same which should hold for a total American program.

For here is the point: Governor Arnall sees Georgia (or the South) as a detail in the mosaic of America. The one cannot hold together without the other. And this is for all of the United States to know, not merely the demagogues in Congress and in Southern Statehouses who insist on the South's right to be different.

Governor Arnall describes the problems, hopes and movements of the South with sight of the all-embracing shore before him. Correlatively, he sees the Nation's problems, its hopes for maintaining free institutions, equal opportunity and equal contribution in light of the South's (and West's) needs of protection from monopoly, centralization, discriminations imposed by vested economic power. And so, his narrative of the "experiment in democracy" which his administration undertook is to be read for its broader reference.

Monopoly and vested power are the dragons to slay. Nobody has ever told better the old story of injustice to the South and the West through discriminatory freight rates. Mr. Arnall gives the thrill and movement of high adventure to the account of his storming the Supreme Court with his case of conspiracy by the railroads. The conspiracy itself, the mumbo-jumbo of rate-making, the somnolence of the Interstate Commerce Commission, the efforts of railroads to evade anti-trust laws through the brazen Bulwinkle Bill, all are illuminated by his indignation and become as clearly understood as the villain in a movie. He wants genuine freedom of opportunity, which he argues has been stifled by sectionalism and colonialism in the United States, by cartels, patent pools and by ignorance imposed by relative poverty (itself the result of the system).

Obviously, to attain all this implies the necessity of freedom from old habits of thought. Mr. Arnall looks upon change with equanimity, even eagerness. Indeed, this freedom from fear of venturing is the central fact of Ellis Arnall as a person, of his administration as an historical period, of this book which is its story and its justification.

Thus, he flies in the face of Deep South political tradition when he stands firmly on the right of Negroes to vote and to share equally in services of health and education. One sees in his chapter, "13,000,000 Americans," why he and his works were the main issues in the Georgia campaign which recently concluded with Eugene Talmadge, the Negro-baiter, victorious. And yet, for all his laboring the point that enlightened and democratic racial attitudes are necessary, he betrays an inward struggle against his social and intellectual inheritance. He stakes his claim to being "a democrat with a little 'd,'" and then goes painstakingly and somewhat obviously about defending it.

Events that occurred after the book was written, including the bitter display of race prejudice in the late summer's political campaigns, have proved that he was too cheerfully confident, and not a little glib, about the South's, and Georgia's, advances on this front. There is yet more work to be done than he admits and more remedies to be applied than he offers.

Another rejection of the classic Southern viewpoint is Mr. Arnall's idea that States' Rights are not inherent but must be won by vitality of public service. They are obligations, not privileges.

This is a joyous book, with more than a few indications that Mr. Arnall is aware of his being a remarkable fellow. As a matter of fact, he is. And one of the most remarkable of his elements is his honest delight in practical politics, in the processes of wooing the vote, in a fondness for the hustings. The book is written with the change of pace of a good stump speaker, with wide swipes of humor, indignation, anecdote, and effective satire. He is definitely a realist in politics, believing in organization and the discipline that must go with responsibility. And he is a Democrat, with a big "D" as well as a little one. A party man, that is; and one of the most promising at 39.

Two Books on Problems of the South

Times-Dispatch

THE SHORE DIMLY SEEN, by Ellis Gibbs Arnall. Philadelphia: The Lippincott Company. 312 pages. $3.

Richmond, Va.

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE, by Stetson Kennedy. Garden City: Doubleday and Company. 372 pages. $3.

Sun. 11-24-46

THERE is one justification for discussing these two books together: Both are about the South. There all similarity ends for, although both authors investigate some of the same problems (and what book about the South could fail to do so?) their views are almost as completely different as considerations of the same subject could possibly be.

Even the jacket blurbs, which seldom are to be trusted on any book, bear out this difference honestly. Mr. Arnall's cover carries the legend: "An exciting record of achievement by 'the South's greatest leader since the Civil War,' and an engaging view of the goals toward which the nation moves." On the cover of Mr. Kennedy's book are the words: "A documented expose of the anti-Democratic forces in the deep South."

Mr. Arnall's book, then, is one of hope; Mr. Kennedy's is one of despair. Further, "Southern Exposure," an obvious effort at sensationalism, is cluttered with discoverable errors, figure-juggling and over-emphasis which would make suspect any truths in the book.

"The Shore Dimly Seen," on the reader has the gilt-edged piece of work. It may have its weakness in that the author attempts to dismay critics of his section by counter-criticism of them (a count of the sneering remarks he makes about Boston would be interesting; Bostonians must have sputtered furiously when they found the city labeled by the Georgian as "America's Tobacco Road").

But with Mr. Arnall's writings the reader has the gilt-edged security of faith. For the author, as Georgia's Governor, has been one of the major interpreters of the Southern scene, and as a direct actionist he has done something about the problems in his own State. In short, he has made more of the motions of statesmanship during the last four years than the South has seen in many a long, weary day.

Mr. Arnall believes that the South is a land of potential greatness. That it has not achieved such a status, he believes, is not due to an inherent lack of morality (as has been charged frequently, and as is intimated by Mr. Kennedy) but to an economic servitude which causes the author to charge that the South, along with the West, provides merely a far-flung and rich colony for the industrial East.

It is to a discussion of that servitude that Mr. Arnall devotes a major portion of his book for, he says, economic freedom and political freedom walk hand in hand. The United States, he declares, has failed to solve its economic problems with the result that "we have permitted unknowingly the erection of a private government (by big corporations and monopolies) to duplicate our public government.

As a way of throwing open America's multitude of opportunities to the nation's possible multitude of inhabitants Mr. Arnall suggests a six-point program: The decentralization of industry to permit the development of sections of our country that now have substandard incomes, that are underdeveloped, and that are subject to the hazards of a colonial economy; abandonment of a colonial policy toward the Southern and Western States; establishment and enforcement of a system of free enterprise in the United States (by "smashing monopolies instead of coddling them"); re-establishment of a decentralized system of government in America; provision for mutual job insurances for all the American people; and adoption of a foreign policy that will permit America to live at peace.

The "colonial" attitude which Governor Arnall attacks is reflected, he says, in the discriminatory freight rates which keep Southern-made goods off the markets in the "official territory" (Eastern) markets, in the monopolies which strangle the South; in politics which sees Federal-aid money distributed on the basis of ability to match funds, rather than on the basis of need.

That the freight-rate question can be answered, the Governor has shown through his personally led fight before the Supreme Court. He suggests, for the monopolies, the application of strict antitrust measures — measures which now result in thousand-dollar fines for nefarious deals involving millions or billions of dollars; but action which would bring the dissolution of consistent violators among corporations. He suggests changes in the patent laws to force progress-making discoveries onto the open market where they will benefit the public rather than the pocketbooks of industrialists.

Mr. Arnall, in dealing with the South's most obvious and most publicized question, the race situation, points out that it is not peculiar to the South (the Southwest has its Mexicans; the Pacific Coast, its third-generation Japanese; Boston, its people who desecrate Jewish cemeteries and smear filth on the walls of synagogues). The presence of the Negro in the South, he says, is no problem, "for a problem assumes the existence of a solution." On the other hand, "Americans of Negro ancestry" have their individual problems, and, believes Governor Arnall, the white South wants to make certain guarantees concerning those problems. His views insist that the Negro is entitled to equal educational opportunity in every way; that he is entitled to equal protection under the law; he is entitled to the rights of citizenship providing he is literate, and "where segregation exists," equivalent facilities must be afforded. Fundamentally, the problem of the Negro in the South, he declares, is a problem of economics, and with economic freedom for all the South the Negro would share in the general prosperity and "would be able to obtain most of the things that he desires."

Mr. Kennedy, on the other hand, apparently sees no hope for the Negro in this section—and, probably, no hope for the entire South. He sees the section as the sole haven of damagogues, as the place where slavery is dead in name only. With few exceptions he can find no evidence that there are such people as Governor Arnall who have recognized and are doing something about the region's problems.

As was pointed out earlier, Mr. Kennedy's errors, his juggling of figures and his over-emphasis hobble the value of his book. As an example, he says that in every Southern State but one, 59 per cent of the revenue is derived from what he calls the inequitable sales tax. There instantly comes to mind the fact that neither Georgia nor Virginia (with which this reviewer is most familiar) has that form of tax.

His juggling of figures is apparent when he discloses that the infant death rate in the South

east is considerably higher than for the nation as a whole. What he doesn't make apparent is that some Southern States (Mississippi comes to mind here) have no law requiring the registration of live births, but all require death registrations. This it is annual incidence of five to six which might be expected to have back into this country from the

"Theres' No Humor in Fear and Poverty: Ann Petry

afro - "American
Baltimore, Md.
Sat.

By Michael Carter

NEW YORK—"The stuff from which 'The Street' was made came from the streets of Harlem—its people and their lives; and is not altogether make-believe," Ann Petry, author of the best-selling novel "The Street," said in an exclusive AFRO interview.

Miss Petry worked for a total of five years on the Harlem weeklies to get material for her book. "I didn't work 'to get material' for the book," she explained. "I worked because I'm a working woman. While I worked, I got material for a book and wrote it."

She is probably the first colored newspaper woman to write a best-seller. She's married, she's happy and she's sentimental, but she explained in two sentences her reasons for wearing two wedding rings. Each ring required one sentence:

"This one was given me by my husband to replace the one I lost.

"This one I bought in the dime store between the time I lost the first one and the time he could get me a second one."

The Petry's—she uses her marriage name—live in a $33-a-month apartment in a big housing development inhabited for the most part by Jews, political liberals and colored people.

In structure, the Upper Bronx apartments are like any low cost housing project, but they boast a great deal of cultural activity.

Working on New Book

There are nursery schools, music and art classes, and lectures going on 12 hours a day in the various club rooms in the buildings.

Wearing trousers, Mrs. Petry greeted me at the door and, after introductions (Edna Guy, the famed colored photographer of children, was present), the interview started.

To my first question, she said: "Yes, I'm working on another book. Suppose you say it's another angle of the minority problem.

"I have a peculiar feeling that if I talk about something, it's done; and so I don't want to talk about it yet. The protagonist in my new book will be a man. Women are too hard to handle."

Second question: "No, I don't think there are too many books about colored people on the market. 3-16-46

"If you stop to think that we've been in this country for about 300 years and during that time we have never been fully accepted, there are not too many, as long as there's a story untold.

"Always, as slaves and free people, we've been treated as sub-humans.

To Get a Laugh

"Even now on radio programs, in the movies and on the stage, when a colored man appears it is notice to get ready to laugh at the creature's stupidity, fear or sub-human traits.

"That's the stuff so many writers use."

Mrs. Petry started in "the writing business" on the Amsterdam News where she worked in the advertising department "and never wrote a line."

She continued, "After about three years, Peoples' Voice was started and Sinky (St. Claire Bourne, now with the State Labor Department) was going to be its editor. Sinky asked me to come along and I went.

ANN PETRY

"Aside from selling advertising on the Amsterdam, I also wrote an advice to the lovelorn column. I think we called it 'Are You Happy?'"

At PV, she was women's editor three days a week. Two days she "covered fires, robberies, murders and general Harlem news."

She quit the Voice when she got a better paying job with the New York Foundation "which was conducting interracial experiments in the education of children." 3-16-46

In the fall of 1944 she started working on her first novel, "The Street." But, she added, "before that I had gotten more than a fair share of rejection slips from magazines."

At that time her husband, George, was in the Army and work on her novel was "good for me.

"I selected 116th St., but it could have been any street. I just happened to know 116th St., so I made it the scene of my novel.

Overcomes Inertia

"The greatest evil a writer has to overcome is inertia and that's why working for the weekly papers is good. I overcame inertia and started writing because I had deadlines to meet."

She has been married for eight years and has no children. "I've nothing to say about children except they are all right," she said.

Her husband formerly managed a Harlem cafe but now writes mystery shorts. "There's no conflict between us on this point.

"I write first in long hand and then on the typewriter. I work generally in the day and he works at night.

"And there is no professional jealousy because we are in two different fields."

Mrs. Petry was born in a little Connecticut town where her father ran a drug store. Only about 15 of the 1500 regular residents in the town were colored and all of Mr. Lane's—the family name—customers were white.

"I was sent to the University of Connecticut and learned pharmacy, too. My uncle runs a drug store in Lyme, Conn. It was decided that I would have one also."

Instead, she married and moved to New York. "For a long time we lived in Harlem. That is where I really saw race prejudice. It was so different from Old Saybrooke, Conn.

"I was happy to get a job on the paper here and I began to learn the real truth about race relations." 3-16-46

That is one of the reasons why Mrs. Petry writes: "A colored author is going to write with truth and compassion. He's not going to see humor in poverty and to laugh at fear and ignorance.

Measure of Objectivity

"He's not going to see anything funny in the status of his people.

Not one of the several books about our people written by colored authors is funny or silly.

"Yet, colored writers are pretty truthful and honest and have achieved a measure of objectivity. Not all white characters are cast as cruel ruffians and not all of the colored characters are noble beings.

"Colored writers take a realistic attitude. "That's what I tried to do in 'The Street' and that's what I shall try to do in my next book and as many books as I can write."

Bad Housing Termed Killer

afro-American Wash.

NEW YORK (ANP)—An interviewer has only to talk briefly with Ann Petry, author of the prize-winning and best-selling "The Street" to realize she is a young woman with an unusually sane and tolerant point of view.

Catapulted into fame through winning the Houghton Mifflin Literary fellowship and by the sucess of her book depicting deplorable living conditions in New York's Harlem, Miss Petry is averse to assuming an evangelical role.

A crusader for better living conditions for her own race and for the underprivileged of all races, she undoubtedly is. 3-30-46

Facts were Too Dull

"Statistics on housing and health appear regularly in the New York press," said Miss Petry, "but the public as a whole skips over these figures. They are too dry to be of interest. A book, a play or picture that can give life to those statistics is another matter. I wrote 'The Street' in an effort to show why colored people has a high crime rate, a high death rate and little or no chance of keeping his family unit intact in large Northern cities. When people tell me reading my book has aroused their sympathy for the poor and underprivileged of Harlem, I am very happy." 3-30-46

Whenever people dicuss wrongs done colored people explained Miss Petry, they most often refer to acts of violence. This sort of barbarity, she continued, has rapidly diminished in recent years and is certainly outlawed by public opinion everywhere.

"There is a cruelty of another kind that we know right in Harlem which is just as deplorable and far more of a problem than sporadic violence," Miss Petry added quietly. "Population figures show that there are five times more people inhabiting Harlem than any other quarter of New York. 3-30-46

"In a small section of Harlem there are apartment houses as comfortable and well-equipped as any to be found in the city, but the overwhelming majority of the population is huddled to the suffocation point in dingy unhealth flats. When one member of a family gets a cold, they all have it. There is no place for children to study or to have wholesome pleasure. There is no possibility for the existence of the family as human beings.

LIFE IN HARLEM

THE STREET, by Ann Petry. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company; 436 pages, $2.50. Birmingham News

Anything goes in this first novel about life in Harlem, a Houghton Mifflin literary fellowship prize winner. The author's comprehensive account, with a fairly sensational plot as bait, forces the reader's emotional identification with the problem, sometimes by dubious tactics. We see New York's 116th Street as it appears to Lutie Johnson, a beautiful and intelligent Negro girl whose marriage ended unhappily after she went away to work in a Connecticut home. With her 8-year-old son, Bub, Lutie tries to start over in Harlem. She has an uncanny ability to understand why Negroes are as they are on streets like this one, but hates them because she fears they will drag her down too. Her very refusal to conform leads to eventual tragedy. On another level, what defeats Lutie is the road she has had to travel all her life, which meets its symbolic expression here among physical and human refuse. Ala. 3-9-46

Wondrous personalities emerge in their relationship to the street. There is Jones, superintendent of the apartment building, who "has lived in basements and close to buildings for too long." He takes part in the final demise when he seeks revenge on disdainful Lutie through her son. There is Mrs. Hedges, an omniscient madam, who sits at an open window because "she never felt cool since the night of the fire." There is Junto, a gray white man, who owns just about everything on the street, including a luxurious night spot where Lutie goes to escape from her foul apartment. There is Min, the janitor's mistress, with her aching feet and mute resignation, perhaps the most successful portrait of them all. These characters, with the exception of a typed tough guy named Boost Smith, are unknowingly used for all they are worth.

Lutie's struggle to prove the existence of free will, or even of opportunities for choice, makes the story both exciting and profound. In the final chapters she has the grim choice of sacrificing her son or herself, and achieves a bare kind of triumph that pushes her even farther down. As propaganda, "The Street" explores the question, "Why don't Negroes do anything for themselves?" In Lutie's words: "It was any place where the women had to work to support the families because the men couldn't get jobs, and the men got bored and pulled out and the kids were left without proper homes . . . where people were so damn poor they didn't have time to do anything but work, and their bodies were the only source of relief from the pressure . . . and where the crowding together made the young girls wise beyond their years." 9-6-46

The author slows up her story with trite adjectives and imagery, but there are compensating spots, as, "The hunger hole in his stomach gaped as wide as the entrance to the subway." Her style will doubtless lose its uncertainty and improve with practice. Her treatment of loneliness in cities is notable, and there is no denying that she can pull highly varied material into a powerful whole. It is to be hoped that the author's bitterness will not, in her next work, overcome her artistic discretion. For it is still possible to be destroyed by one's own hate.—MARY ELLEN CRANE. Ala & Nola

Civilized Nomad

New York, N.Y.

Lafcadio Hearn, by Vera McWilliams. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 465 pages. $3.

New Republic

THE USUAL EXCUSE of popular biographers, that their hero has been neglected or misunderstood, is scarcely warranted in this case; for Lafcadio Hearn, whose career was an ever curious search for literary material, ended by becoming an object of curiosity—and controversy—on the part of other writers. No minor writer, during the first quarter of the twentieth century, was more extravagantly overvalued by connoisseurs of style, collectors of esoterica and critics as well. More recent, more realistic standards have inevitably and justly deflated his vogue. Since he mixed his colors with an artificial pigment, they were predisposed to fade. And esthetic impressionism is no longer the mood in which we approach his favorite subject, Japan. We cannot blame Hearn for the fact that East and West still remain aloof; but having volunteered to interpret them to each other, he was handicapped by his failure to master the Japanese language, and even more by his tendency to stress the little odd details while ignoring the large common problems. He had been more effective, during his American newspaper days, as an interpreter of French naturalism and symbolism; but Flaubert, Gautier and the others he introduced could more eloquently speak for themselves, while Hearn moved on with characteristic restlessness to remoter fields. Mon 4-22-46

In a world so self-consciously unified as ours, for a generation so widely traveled as that which is now returning from its travels, it is doubtful whether his works will regain their elusive charm—the charm that the exotic holds for the sedentary. A new book about him, in order to justify its existence, would have to be much more thoughtfully conceived and carefully written than this one. It would depend more on choice of words and less on exclamation points; it would be better informed on Hearn's various backgrounds and not so ready to accept his tall tales at their face value. Discarding the usual apologetics, it would honor him for his role as a cultural intermediary; frankly recognizing the triviality of his writing, it would analyze him, psychologically and sociologically, as an extreme example of the strained relations between the writer and his environment. An acute realization of this predicament is implicit in every nuance and cadence Hearn wrote; it becomes explicit when he describes himself as "the civilized nomad whose wanderings are not prompted by hope of gain, nor determined by pleasure, but simply impelled by certain necessities of his being—the man whose inner secret nature is totally at variance with the stable conditions of a society to which he belongs only by accident. . . ."

The direction of more recent literature is pointed by Hemingway's text from Donne: "No man is an island." But, if ever a man were an island, it would be Hearn. Born in the isles of Greece to a native mother, he was brought up by his father's family in Ireland. Of the twenty years during which he inhabited this hemisphere, the two happiest were spent in the West Indies. Though Japan remained his ultimate destination, had his health not failed him he might conceivably have sought further archipelagos. He was further isolated by his hybrid parentage, his slight stature and his impaired eyesight. To what extent did these stigmata compel him, we should like to know, toward Tennyson's vista of a summer isle, a savage woman and a dusky race? Searching for local color as a cub reporter in Cincinnati, he had found it with a vengeance; to escape the social consequences of a more or less legal marriage with a mulatto, he had fled—to New Orleans and southward. Ultimately, by taking a Japanese wife and being adopted into her Samurai household, the nonconformist made the supreme gesture of conformity and the homeless bohemian found a rigidly formalized home, where lotus—as Hearn told his friends—was "a common article of diet." Not even Ezra Pound condemned himself more relentlessly to the vicious circle of artistic expatriation.

One of the nostalgic touches, which Mrs. McWilliams deems it pertinent to quote, is a description of Messrs. Houghton Mifflin as "essentially a *literature* firm." The italics are Hearn's.

HARRY LEVIN

'The Street'—A Powerful Novel of Harlem Tragedy

Daily Worker New York

Wed. 3-20-46

By JOHN MELDON

REVERSING the reviewer's usual procedure of doling out hosannas, or praise with faint damns or outright thumbs down at the end of the review, I'd like to start by recommending that every one who can lay hands on Ann Petry's **The Street** (Houghton Mifflin) do so without delay. I say this despite the terrible letdown the author gives the reader in the last few pages of this modern tragedy in a Harlem setting.

THE STREET, by Ann Petry. Houghton Mifflin. Literary Prize Novel. 436 pp.

The Street is a Literary Fellowship prize novel and I think the publisher deserves a hearty handshake for selecting this book by a Negro writer as one of its top presentations. I can only hope that hundreds of thousands of white people read it, and profit as better citizens and democrats thereby. For **The Street** is a powerful shock treatment for that great mass of complacent white folk who mumble abstractions about the plight of our Negro brothers but shy away from doing anything practical about it. Wed. 3-20-46

THE TRUTH IN

ANN PETRY

ALL ITS CRUELTY

Ann Petry pulls no punches in writing the heart-breaking story of Lutie Johnson, the young and beautiful Negro mother and her nine year old son Bub and Lutie's losing struggle to keep herself and her son from collapsing into the moral muck and economic mire that hangs eternally over poverty swept Harlem. The author knows and loves her people, but she refuses to stoop to false characterizations of her people; when they are bad, thus they are presented; when they are morally benumbed or even sex-twisted, she paints the picture in all its rude and painful color. But—and this is the great value of the book—Ann Petry presents, with a cold and savage logic the underlying economic and social reasons for the good, bad and indifferent types who parade through **The Street** with an ominous tread.

Some people will not like **The Street** particularly some of our friends far to the left of the barricades. They will dismiss, or condemn this book as "defeatist" because (a) nowhere does the author present the feeling of a progressive movement in Harlem and (b) Lutie Johnson succumbs to utter defeat at the end.

I am ready to take sharp issue with such an evaluation of "The Street," because there are many Lutie Johnsons in Harlem and, with due respect to Harlem's election of Ben Davis and Rep. Adam Clayton Powell—the progressive movement in Harlem (thus far) has not become broad enough and sufficiently rooted to the extent that a Lutie Johnson, in fiction or real life, would know where to turn for help and a broader understanding of her pitiful problems. And while I believe the author herself sounded a too pessimistic note in her finale, permitting Lutie to abandon the child she loves to the mercy of the juvenile courts, one cannot overlook the fact that what happened to Lutie's little boy happens every day to some other Harlem mother's child in real life. Wed. 3-20-46

Finally, I recommend **The Street** to white readers for the experience of seeing ourselves as others see us. If you want to be stunned down to your shoe leather, **The Street** will give you the unvarnished version of what the average Harlem Negro thinks of their white oppressors and the white race generally. And a reading of this book will convince any honest person that there is a tremendous amount of work to be done before the shopworn, often lip-serviced slogan of "black and white unity" becomes a reality.

AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

Chicago Defender

A Woman's Place In Harlem

Chicago, Ill.

By EARL CONRAD
(Defender New York Bureau)

NEW YORK — Ann Petry, a young woman still in her twenties, and author of the Houghton-Mifflin Literary Fellowship winner, "The Street," which will be issued next week, is a person of distinction at the very outset of her career.

Sat 1-2-46

She is, at the moment, the most apt symbol of "the Negro woman question" that I know of.

To my knowledge she is the first Negro woman to win a prize award in the field of the novel, and is, indeed, one of the few Negro women to penetrate the field of the novel. There are probably not more than two or three others who, in the present period, have published novels.

That, in itself, reveals remarkably the status of the Negro woman. Miss Petry explained this:

"That is understandable only when you realize the condition of the mass of Negro women. The fact that few Negro women have had the opportunity to write, to secure the leisure, study, and to do the reading necessary to write, itself shows where the Negro woman has been: she has been hard at work earning a livelihood, not only for herself, but often for a whole family.

Bears Economic Burden

"The Negro woman, with the responsible, matriarchal role she has had to play, has been a principal bearer of the economic burden. No wonder she could not enter into the field of the novelist."

The woman question is itself the theme of which Miss Petry writes. She has written the story of an "average" Negro woman and she shows the difficulties under which this woman labors to raise a child in a Harlem ghetto, while, at the same time, she works. Surely this is a frequent situation in Negro life.

The pretty and intelligent-looking author said:

"Most books that have delineated Negro women have shown them as prostitutes or other disreputable characters. These women have had no particular moral code, and such writing has given the impression that this is the true Negro woman. That, of course, isn't so. You have all kinds of Negro women, just as you have all kinds of women in all groups. In 'The Street' I have tried to portray a struggling woman, with aspirations, with decency. Negroes are not the comics they have been portrayed, nor are they criminals. They are people, and I have tried to show 'just people' in this book."

"Is it possible," I asked, "that your book presents in the novel form something of the life described in sociological language in 'Black Metropolis?'"

"That," she answered, "is a pretty good idea of what I've attempted."

Surprised By Award

It struck me that the youthful novelist has a rather shy manner. She wasn't very anxious to speak of herself, and she gave me a "handout" prepared by her publishers which projected background information. "Oh, I don't want to talk about my background," she said, but she admitted she was married.

"Were you happy to win the award?"

Sat 2-2-46

"Happy is not quite the word. It was the surprise. I guess I didn't quite expect it."

"I hope that what I have written is seen as a denunciation of the ghetto for it is concentrated and restricted living such as you have in places like Harlem that wrecks families, feeds crime, prevents the growth of real personality."

"Then your book is an attack on the restrictive covenant?" I asked.

"That's the term," she said. "The restrictive covenant is the great evil that suppresses and oppresses the Negro. It is the Negro woman who is a principal sufferer from this."

Would it be correct, I asked, to describe Harlem as a semi-concentration camp?

Since the book describes the life of children playing in a typical city street I asked her whether she had any children.

No, she did not. But she has worked with children extensively and feels she understands them. She was employed once for nine months in an elementary school, on a project that was an experiment in education. That and other contacts with children helped her to see how youngsters were victimized in "the street."

"I did a lot of following up on that experience, saw the sort of thing that happens to children. Of course the whole thing is economic or social at base."

She ventured this observation. "The anti-discrimination law that we have here in New York state can't possibly do a job alone. There's a great deal of general education to be done."

She returned to the theme of the Negro woman's problem. "Where the male parent often cannot get a job he drifts away. It is a very human and natural thing. This often leaves the Negro woman to do the best she can to support her child or children. But the best she can do is not enough. We (society) still don't look after our children."

No Blanket Indictment

Then I told her I was going to ask a question which, I hoped, wouldn't sound silly. I have often asked white Americans the blanket question, "What do you think of Negroes?" and it always elicits interesting responses. This time I asked Ann Petry, "What do you think of white Americans?"

She smiled at me, wondering what I was after.

I mentioned Chester B. Himes' book, "If He Hollers Let Him Go" which portrays a social type hating and reacting sharply to white America.

Sat 2-2-46

"That's a very understandable reaction," she said. "But I have no blanket indictment of all white Americans. I do not turn around and dislike people just because they may have the shortcoming of disliking me."

Then she added thoughtfully, "I hope that day is not far off when white America is as liberal as Negro America."

And I think that, in this latter statement on the liberality of Negro America, the thoughtful Miss Petry has stated an interesting truth. I think she herself is an expression of the hope and aspiration of Negro America in spite of the great oppression.

But her hopes have often been tempered with doubts, she admitted. "Sometimes I do see a change in the situation and sometimes I don't. You might pick up a newspaper which, on one page, tells of something very hopeful, but on another reveals the continuance of the same old evils."

Discussed Mixed Marriage

Then she said, with pressure in her voice, "America can't go on holding onto a caste system."

I mentioned the case of the Rev. Frank White, white Unitarian minister who, this week, is marrying a Negro girl, Anne Anderson of Norfolk, Va., and Louisville, Ky. She gave me a wry look and commented with a little hesitation, "Now ordinarily that would be the question of someone who had prejudices," and she looked

ANN PETRY

on but don't act. They sit on their hands. They should get off their hands."

Reads Great Deal

Back to literature and the woman question, Miss Petry said:

"There are not enough Negro novelists. Certainly there are not enough Negro women novelists. I suppose this is part of the American tradition, a tradition of white America, not to extend rights to women too easily. Even now, in the political scene, you have no woman in the cabinet, little likelihood of a woman President in this century. This tradition of holding out on granting rights and political and cultural responsibilities to women extends to the political parties, reaches into the labor movement."

Ann Petry said she has been a voracious reader. "If I didn't have anything better to read than a telephone book, I'd probably read that," she said. And she doesn't know of any specific literary influence in her past.

She is a great admirer of the late Theodore Dreiser and she said it was tragic that this man of talent had never won any literary award in his lifetime. She believes he did much to establish the school of literary realism in this country.

I knew she was a writer, and tops at that, when, as her parting shot, she remarked, "If you want to write something personal just say that I'm not fit to talk to when I get up in the morning until I have a cup of coffee."

"What, you too?" I exclaimed.

"Ah yes," she said, "coffee makes it a more pleasant world."

Ann Petry Says 'The Street' Is First of Series on Negro Life

By BETH McHENRY

ANN PETRY whose first novel "The Street" is being widely discussed wherever people read books says she means to keep right on writing about the problems caused by race prejudice.

"What I hope to do is to take segments of this problem and dramatize them in a series of books," she told us in an interview yesterday. "And each time I hope to present the public with something that will serve as an emotional arouser and move them to action."

ANN PETRY

We found Mrs. Petry at her apartment in the East Bronx and interrupted her 9 to 5 writing schedule long enough to get an impression of the seriousness with which she approaches her work. She definitely views her talent as a weapon but thinks that a grave danger exists for the writer who remembers only the weapon and forgets the art part of the current slogan. She said she had been reading the current literary discussion in the "Daily" and the New Masses and regards the open approach to the problem as healthy and valuable.

"The Street," a novel of Harlem tragedy, was actually the problem of years of thinking, observing and experiencing, although the actual writing of the book took Ann Petry only a year. She is pleased by the success it is having, pleased and surprised, she said. After all, she told us, this is my first book and it's still like something of a dream, having it published.

"I thought the review in your paper was one of the best I read of my book," she told us. "It seemed to me to get to the heart of what I was trying to say."

Asked what she thought of the criticism of the "let-down" in "The Street's" ending, she smiled and said she did not believe a different ending, with hopeful conclusions, would have altered the effect of the book in any real sense.

"I feel that the portrayal of a problem in itself, in all its cruelty and horror, is actually the thing which sets people thinking, and not any solution that may be offered in a novel," she told us. "After all a lot of the people who would read my book probably already have some intellectual convictions about this particular problem, but they'll have to be made to feel—anger, horror, indignation— before they'll actually move on any program to solve the problem. And if they're angry enough or indignant enough they'll find the solution."

Mrs. Petry, an attractive young woman with a warm friendly manner, was born in Saybrook, Connecticut and took her degree in pharmacy at the University of Connecticut. She worked then in her father's drugstore where "we sold much more of everything else—postcards, electric irons, and face powder—than we did prescription drugs." After a couple of years she came on to New York and got her first job on the Amsterdam News in the advertising department. Later when the People's Voice was launched she went there as the Woman's Editor. In both places she was an active member of the Newspaper Guild.

KNOWS THE THEATRE FROM 'INSIDE'

Ann Petry has a deep love for the theater, although she says that she has no yearning to write plays. She just gets a lot out of seeing them. A few years ago her interest in the theater drove her to seek an acting part in the American Negro Theater production "Strivers' Row." To her surprise she got the part, played it three nights a week for "months and months." She feels that it helped her to become a better writer, gave her a firmer grasp of character construction.

Ann Petry spoke regretfully over the almost total absence of Negro playwrights, despite the increased number of plays on Negro themes. She thinks much has to be done to encourage and build up a real Negro literature generally.

Politically, Mrs. Petry says she is not affiliated with any party. This, she admits, is a mistake, declaring that she believes the only way a responsible human being can be an effective one is to join the party of his choice and become involved in its activities. Her one organizational activity now is her job as executive secretary of Negro Women, Inc., which functions as a progressive community organization in Harlem.

She plans to live in a small town again soon, expects to do "an enormous amount of writing." The city, she finds, with its immense store of things to do is distracting. She does not, however, plan to become a writer isolated completely from people or from activity. Her plan is so to divide her time that she can come across with full-time community activity for at least three months of every year.

The Street. By Ann Petry. Houghton, Mifflin. 436 pp. $2.50

Negro literature of protest is beginning to mature. Among the best of the Negro writers there now appears an element of self-criticism. To some extent every individual is responsible for his own conduct.

PETRY

Ann Petry, like Richard Wright, lends dignity to Negro literature by treating her race with cold logic and utter realism. She hates the white scum preying on the Negro. She despises almost as thoroughly the patronage of the "kindly" white employer. But Bilbo himself could scarcely have written a more blistering blast against Negro males in Harlem than this Negro author.

This highly educated woman, from a long line of chemists and pharmacists, is incensed by the living conditions in New York's black slums. But she is almost equally incensed by the manner in which Negroes prey upon each other, particularly the way in which shiftless and criminal Negro males prey upon Negro females—often virtually forcing them into prostitution.

"The Street" might have been entitled "Black Girl" as a counterpart to Richard Wright's "Black Boy." Not as well written as Wright's books, it is no less honest and no less bitter.

It tells how Lutie and her child Bub attempt to make an honest living against almost incredible odds; how Lutie lives in fear of the half-insane building superintendent in her filthy walk-up apartment; how she is victimized by a black band-leader and a white night-club owner.

Several unforgettable characters emerge from this sordid story. The gargantuan Negro woman, Mrs. Hedges, who runs a hole-in-the-wall brothel, is actually Hogarthian.

This book in no way whitewashes the insufferable victimization of the black race by the white. Nor does it suggest to the thoughtful reader that the much-vaunted "Nordic" would be any less irresponsible if the situation were reversed. But it does indicate that Negro realists are demanding of their own people a higher code of ethics as one of the first steps toward the better life.

A Novel of Hardships

Negro Problems Recounted Without Rancor

Richmond, Va.

THE STREET, by Ann Petry. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company. 436 pp. $2.50.

Times-Dispatch

Reviewed by
By Betty Sessler

2-10-46

THE STREET was cold in the Winter, hot in the Summer. It was dirty, grim, filled with children and hungry people There was no escape!

The street was One Hundred and Sixteenth Street, Harlem. Lutie Johnson, a pretty Negro woman, lived there with her young son, Bub. She lived in a dingy room of a top floor. Every night as she came home from work she was ogled by the wild-eyed superintendent on the first floor. She was honeyed to by the woman in the front window, who said, "A nice white man wants you."

2-10-46

Lutie Johnson was in love when she married Jim. But times were hard and Jim could get no work. So Lutie took a job as housekeeper for a Connecticut family and Jim ran off with another woman.

Lutie Johnson had finished high school at great sacrifice because she wanted an education. She went to business school. She took Civil Service examinations. Most of all she wanted a pleasant place where she could raise her son into a decent man.

Pay the rent, save a little, pay the rent, save a little.

The words beat a hopeless tattoo in Lutie's mind, and because she harped so much on economy, her son got into trouble.

Lutie Johnson's struggle was against hopeless odds, not the least of which was her own good looks.

The Street is a tensely written book by a talented Negro author, who makes the reader almost breathless with the hopelessness of it all. She has vividly described a social challenge for which there seems no solution.

Unlike Richards Wright's "Black Boy," there is, in this book, little resentment against white persons, little racial antagonism.

2-10-46

The Street is the story of a Negro woman, handicapped by purely Negro problems and the climax is inevitable.

To this reader, "The Street," which has won a literary fellowship prize, is one of the better social novels to have been writ-

The Street

ten in recent years—it's gripping and real.

Prize Winning Novel Best Seller Candidate

The People's Voice New York, N.Y.

1-12-46

Ann Petry's novel, *The Street*, will be launched January 23, with its road to success already paved by well-known literary critics who have previewed it with loud hosannas.

Mrs. Petry, first Negro winner of a Houghton-Mifflin Literary Fellowship Award, was discovered by the publishing company in 1943 when her first short story, **On Saturday the Siren Sounds at Noon** was published by **Crisis** magazine. One of the company's representatives contacted her, asking if she had in mind a future novel. At the time she did not, but promised when she started one she would apply for a fellowship.

The following year found Mrs. Petry's novel well begun. She submitted the two or three chapters and outline of the plot necessary to Houghton-Mifflin and shortly after received notice of a $2,400 award. The book was completed last fall. A warm, moving story of a young mother attempting to raise a boy in the ghetto that is Harlem, it is not the usual raceieremiad to which Negro authors devote their talents. It will soon be reviewed in **PV's Chapter and Verse** by book editor Merle Nance.

Ann Petry is a native of Old Saybrook, Connecticut. She attended University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy. Upon graduation, she began work at her father's drugstore in Saybrook as a registered pharmacist. Always having had literary tendencies, she soon found her way to NY to initiate her newspaper work with a job as an advertising solicitor on the **Amsterdam News.** Here her writing abilities were devoted to a beauty column.

When **PV** started publication, she immediately took a job as its first and only woman's editor. She left **PV** after a year, in 1943, and began work in the public school system with juvenile problems. It was here, at a school located on 117th and St. Nicholas, that she gained the background and material for **The Street.**

1-12-46

Her husband, George Petry, whom she married about seven years ago, is also of the literary world.

Mrs. Petry has already begun another book, which Houghton-Mifflin has assured her they will accept for publication.

Ann Petry, Pharmacist, Wins Fame Writing Gripping Novel

Journal & Guide Norfolk, Va. 1-2-23-46

NEW YORK—(ANP)—Ann Petry, whose first novel, "The Street" was published last week, is the sole member of her family in three generations to follow another than their traditional field, chemistry.

The daughter and granddaughter of chemists with an aunt and uncle who are druggists, Mrs. Petry herself is a registered pharmacist, having graduated from the University of Connecticut college of pharmacy.

A native of Old Saybrook, Conn., she practiced as a pharmacist in the family drugstore there before her marriage which brought her to New York. Once in New York, ambition to write dwarfed her interest in pharmacy and she sought jobs which would give her an opportunity to write, jobs ranging from advertising to covering general news stories.

INTERVIEW CELEBRITIES

It was while interviewing celebrities, covering political campaigns and three-alarm fires, reporting on murders and other forms of sudden death that the idea for "The Street" arose. Struck with the tragedy which prevades Harlem, Mrs. Petry began to inquire into its evil housing, broken families, and high death rate. Nine months were spent working on an experiment in education where she could observe firsthand the toll that segregated areas exact in the twisting and warping of the lives of children.

3-2-23-46

Mrs. Petry, whose first published short story appeared in the November, 1943, ssue of "The Crisis," monthly magazine of the NAACP, was approached about a novel after this story was read by Houghton Mifflin publishers. The following year she submitted the first five chapters and a complete synopsis of "The Street," and was awarded the $2,400 Houghton Mifflin fellowship for 1945. This enabled her to complete the book.

"I wrote 'The Street' in an effort to show why the Negro has a high crime rate, a high death rate and little or no chance of keeping his family unit intact in large northern cities," Mrs. Petry explains. The story of a young woman who attempts to bring up her son in the slum section of Harlem, "The Street" is a gripping picture of life as it is lived by Negroes in overcrowded tenements.

DIXIE HEROINES

Little Eva Is No Match For Scarlett

Sun. 4-28-46

Constitution Atlanta, Ga.

By DORIS LOCKERMAN
Constitution Staff Writer.

Evangeline St. Clare and Scarlett O'Hara, the two Southern girls with the international box office, lived just a few years apart in their magnolia-scented world of fiction.

But they never competed for anyone's eye at a houseparty. A few billion light years separated the sad Little Eva of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and the alluring, sometimes terrifying lady of "Gone with the Wind."

Of course Little Eva was the creation of a lady from the North, who was crusading for the abolition of slavery. Harriet Beecher Stowe was a great propagandist but she never belonged Down South. Yet, ask any adult to name two feminine characters in Southern literature, and here comes Little Eva, smiling wanly, in her pinafore listening to the angels' wings, apparently oblivious to the fact that her "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Look at the two characters. The darling of the 1850's, the maidenly Eva, fiery Scarlett O'Hara would admit it, especially if she had ever given a woman a run for her money.

Heroines have strolled in and out of Southern literature since Evangeline was translated in 18 different languages and traveled all over the world. The soldiers from Thomas Nelson Page, had the breath of reality. Eva moved around the hardy, in a tent-show, but she saw the world before the Tom shows cold, selfish, ruthless, dynamic Scarlett was a lovable, and Miss Remus But in the end, Little Eva, concealing in the most de- Uncle Remus were retired from the circuits. force, ceptive body ever given a woman real as your Aunt Evans Wilson, of Tennessee, as did the world, to Scar- a human booby trap. Baxter of "The Lett O'Hara of the slanting green If any woman can be typical "Lebanon," Caro eyes, whose name never needs quotation marks. It'll take a lot of Little Evas to push her ... a region, it is not S. O'Hara. ty heroine, were wholly understandable women. Even the tempestu- been the vibrant O'Hara.

Books of the Times

By CHARLES POORE

ANN PETRY'S "The Street"* is a novel of Harlem written from the Negro point of view; it is also a story of human hope and disaster that would be valid in many other places, from other points of view.

For the furies of bigotry and poverty and fear that pursue Lutie Johnson and her son in this story are furies that don't just imperil certain individuals, certain groups; in different forms, at different times, they imperil practically everyone. But it is the individual case that drives the universal truth home. That, as Conrad said, is the business of the novelist: to make you see. And he can only do it if he produces convincing characters in a convincing scene; when a novel is overloaded with thesis and underloaded with life the thesis remains, but the story dies.

Ann Petry

Miss Petry's scene is decidedly convincing; most of her characters are, too, though some of the white ones are a bit distorted. They are distorted, one suspects, to just about the degree that colored characters are sometimes distorted in novels written by white people. In any case, they have not given Lutie Johnson overwhelming reason to regard them with enthusiastic fondness.

A Baleful Street in Harlem

She was still young, still pretty, and her driving idea was to give her small son a measure of security and happiness. Nothing lavish; just a place where he could play in pleasant surroundings, enough to eat, enough money so that there would not always be that desperate fear of eviction and hunger. Her marriage had already broken up because her husband had not been able to get work in the depression years, and while she was away working for the curiously drawn Chandler family in Connecticut he had found other interests. Since then she had worked in a steam laundry, learned stenography at night, fought off endless unwelcome attentions that always followed the same pattern and got away from her father's drunken household, finding rooms for herself and her son in a foul and ramshackle tenement. That tenement was in the street that came to personify all the evil that came from all sides.

You won't forget that Harlem street. You see it at all hours of the day and night, in all weathers. You see the dust and the dirt and the swarming kids playing among the garbage cans. You hear the blaring radios and the screams of people living and dying with a kind of hopeless violence.

It is a fault of the novel that the only two characters who are given a full complement of goodness are Lutie and her son. That, of course, is because the thesis requires the street to have its baleful effect on everyone, sooner or later.

*THE STREET. *By Ann Petry. 436 pages. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.*

However, you wish that it did not give Lutie such a continual air of being superior to all the characters around her.

The street warps them all. There is Mrs. Hedges, a monstrous apparition always to be seen in a front window of the building, looking out from her apartment, where love is for sale. Mrs. Hedges makes money through various other devious ventures in partnership with Junto, the white proprietor of dance halls, bars and such. There is Jones, the superintendent, turning subhuman in his underground life, who pursues Lutie throughout the novel and finally revenges himself on her by teaching her son to rob mail boxes, telling him it is to catch spies and then turning him over to the authorities. There is Min, who lives with Jones in continual fear of his wrath, who consults the Prophet David and gets potions and charms to prevent him from throwing her out, though she is eventually glad to go of her own volition. There is Boots Smith, the bandleader at Junto's casino, who is sufficiently warped without living on the street.

Tragedy Inevitable at End

One chance at a successful solution to her dilemma is given Lutie when Boots Smith hears her sing and offers her a chance to appear with his band. She makes a successful appearance. It seems probable that she may be on her way to security at last. But Junto, having other intentions, will not pay her a regular salary. And when she tries to get an audition elsewhere fate—in the person of the novelist—sees to it that her attempts come to nothing.

The cumulative power of the book is considerable. Episode by episode you see forces of white supremacy marshalled against the people it is keeping down, so that tragedy is not only inevitable at the end, it is present throughout most of the time of the story.

A flashback technique, managed with fluid skill, takes us into the backgrounds of the characters. You see the high hopefulness of the early days of the marriage slowly disintegrating as one expedient after another fails to provide enough money to keep the family together in a mortgaged Jamaica house. You see the gruesome beginnings of the Junto-Hedges partnership as scavengers on the street. You see the experiences of the past that made Boots Smith as implacably hard as he is in his dealings.

This is a skillfully written and forceful first novel. An announcement by the publishers says that the author, who was born in Old Saybrook, Conn., and is a graduate of the University of Connecticut, gathered her material while working on newspapers in Harlem. "The Street," a Literary Fellowship Prize novel, was written while her husband was in the American Army.

Harlem made Ann Petry write her novel

THE STREET, the new novel by Ann Petry, which won the Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Prize, is about life in Harlem. It presents a grim picture of the eternal shadow of hunger and violence which hangs over the ghetto and makes life fear-ridden and tragic.

Because the reviewers were unanimous in describing *The Street* as "very convincing," we went up to Bronx Park East where Miss Petry lives with her husband, who is fresh out of the Army, to ask her if she had personally encountered much of the kind of violence she put in the book. She told us she had.

Photo by Morris Engel

Ann Petry, who was a reporter once herself.

Miss Petry, a vivacious, bronze-complexioned woman, said Harlem and its slums were foreign to her before 1938, when she left a comfortable and secure life as a pharmacist in her father's drug store in Old Saybrook, Conn., to get married and live in New York. "But," she told us, "it took me only a few days to experience the shock and nightmare of Harlem."

It was typical

A week after the Petrys had moved into a house on West 146th Street, there was a fire next door in which three little children were suffocated to death. Their mother, who was separated from her husband, had been away at work when it happened.

"It was unbelievable," Miss Petry said. "The children lived in a one-room apartment in a house originally designed for one family. It wasn't something I could accept as merely an accident. It was typical of Harlem."

Miss Petry lived in Harlem five years. She held jobs on the *Amsterdam News* and the *People's Voice*, Harlem weeklies, for which she "covered murders on Lenox Avenue, fires on a gang of streets, weddings, christenings, funerals," and she was always writing short stories about the life around her. One of these, *On Saturday the Siren Sounds at Noon*, published in *Crisis* magazine, came to the attention of Houghton Mifflin, who asked if she was interested in writing a novel. She was.

She told us of one story she covered as a reporter, which she used in *The Street*. It was about a boy who'd been stabbed by the owner of a delicatessen store. The owner said the boy had tried to rob him.

"Anyway," Miss Petry said, "the boy staggered out of the store with the knife in his back, and collapsed on the sidewalk. The white press was on hand to cover the occasion, and they reported that a 'big burly Negro' had been foiled in another robbery attempt. It infuriated me, because the boy was thin and ragged, a pathetic sight.

A dismal, hopeless thing

"It seems almost inevitable for the white press to find brutality when they describe violence in Harlem," she went on. "But the violence there isn't even the violence of revolt. It's a violence of despair and frustration. It struggles blindly to destroy the individuals responsible for the Harlem ghetto, but it ends in destroying the victims as well as the instigators."

There was a pause, then she continued: "You don't have to work on a Harlem newspaper to get a picture of the violence and poverty there. Just go into some of the houses. You'll see rooms so small, and halls so narrow, it won't seem possible they were designed for humans to live in.

"Just live in one of those houses for a week. Any night you're liable to wake up and hear somebody screaming his head off—because he's sick, or because he's being beaten. You'll hear rats scratching around in the walls, see garbage piled in the halls and strewn in the backyards. Life will become a dismal, hopeless thing, and you'll want to write a novel, too."